

OUTRAGEOUS 1950s EC COMICS!



NO. 10

DEC



200

275

CANADA

SHOCK

SUSPENSTORIES

JOLTING TALES OF
TENSION

IN THE



TRADITION!

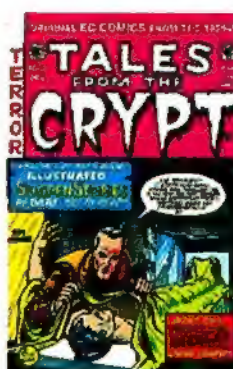


BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE **FAMOUS** (AND INFAMOUS!) **EC COMICS** LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE **FIRST ISSUE** OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE **BITTER END!** GET ON THE BANDWAGON, AND **FILL IN THE GAPS** IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!!



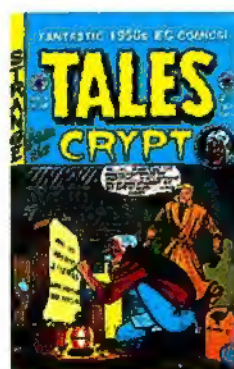
CRYPT #1



CRYPT #2



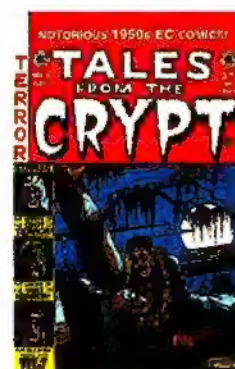
CRYPT #3



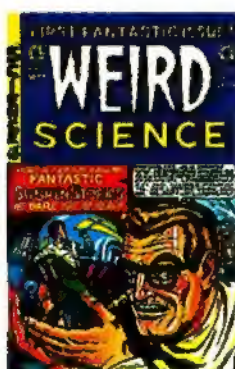
CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



W SCI #1



W SCI #2



W SCI #3



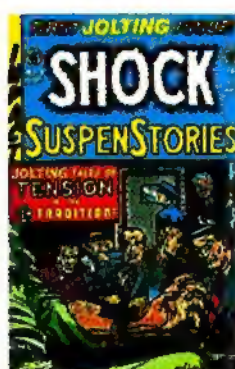
W SCI #4



W SCI #5



W SCI #6



SHOCK #1



SHOCK #2



SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



SHOCK #6

EACH 32-PAGE COMIC REPRINTS THE COVER AND ENTIRE STORY CONTENT OF ITS 1950s PREDECESSOR, IN FULL COMIC BOOK COLOR IN STANDARD COMIC BOOK FORMAT. THEY ARE RELEASED ON QUARTERLY SCHEDULES.

OTHER TITLES IN THE LINE ARE: **VAULT**, **WEIRD FANTASY**, **TWO-FISTED TALES**, **HAUNT**, **WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY** AND **CRIME!** THE BACKLIST ON EVERY TITLE REPRESENTS THE SAME ISSUE SPAN AS THOSE ILLUSTRATED ABOVE. SEE THE AD IN THIS COMIC TO **SUBSCRIBE** TO ANY OR EVERY TITLE!

WHEN ORDERING PLEASE IDENTIFY AS **32-PG TITLE ISSUE #?**; FOR EXAMPLE "**32PG SHOCK #1.**" 32PG CRYPT #1, \$3 EACH (SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY); ALL OTHERS UP THRU #3, \$1.50 EACH; ALL TITLES ISSUE #4 AND UP \$2 EACH. INCLUDE \$5 PER ORDER FOR S&H (\$10 OUTSIDE US).

US FUNDS ONLY

MISSOURI RESIDENTS MUST ADD 6.225% SALES TAX
GEMSTONE PUBLISHING 417-256-2224

OR TO ORDER CALL 1-800-EC CRYPT AND ASK FOR THE ORDER DESK. **USE THIS NUMBER FOR ORDERS ONLY!**

PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

MARYLAND RESIDENTS MUST ADD 5% SALES TAX
POB 469 WEST PLAINS, MO 65775

Shock SuspensStories (USPS 009306) Vol. 1, No 10, December 1994, published quarterly in September, December, March and June by Gemstone Publishing, 202 Ald, West Plains, MO 65775-3532. Second-class postage paid at West Plains, MO. Entire contents © 1994 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. Shock SuspensStories #10 © 1953 by Tiny Tot Comics, Inc., re © 1981 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing herein contained may be reproduced without the written permission of William M. Gaines, New York, New York. Annual subscription rate \$8 (\$12 outside US payable in US funds). Printed in U.S.A. Postmaster: send address changes to Shock SuspensStories, Russ Cochran, PO Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775-0469.

The SACRIFICE

I HAVE JUST WRITTEN, SIGNED AND MAILED TO THE POLICE A CAREFULLY WORDED STATEMENT, CONFESSING TO THE MURDER OF JONATHAN FIELDING... COMPLETELY ABSOLVING HIS WIDOW, GLORIA FIELDING, OF ANY COMPLICITY IN THE HORRENDOUS DEED AND CLEARING HER NAME OF ALL GUILT. I HAVE DONE THIS OUT OF THE DEEP LOVE AND COMPASSION I HAVE FOR THIS WOMAN. I CANNOT BEAR TO SEE HER SUFFER ANOTHER NIGHT OF DEGRADATION AND HUMILITY SUCH AS SHE IS NOW ENDURING AT THIS VERY MOMENT. IN AN HOUR OR SO, GLORIA WILL BE COMING IN THE DOOR... RED-EYED AND SOBBING. AND IT WILL BE THE LAST TIME FOR HER. NOW, I STAND BEFORE THE HUGE FRENCH DOORS LEADING OUT ONTO HER PENTHOUSE BALCONY. IN THE EAST, THE NIGHT SKY IS JUST BEGINNING TO RETREAT FROM THE ADVANCING DAWN. I LIFT THE VIAL OF POISON TO MY LIPS, AND I DRINK IT DOWN...



**A CRIME
SUSPENSORY**

THERE IS A *BURNING* WITHIN ME... A *LIQUID FIRE* CARRYING WITH IT *THE TOUCH OF DEATH*. IN A FEW MINUTES I WILL *FEEL* THAT TOUCH, AND I WILL *DIE* AND *GLORIA* WILL *FINALLY BE FREE*. I TURN AND WALK SLOWLY TO A CHAIR, SINKING DOWN INTO ITS LUXURIOUS SOFTNESS. THE MUSIC FROM THE PHONOGRAPH DRIFTS ACROSS THE PENTHOUSE LIVING-ROOM. MUSIC... SWEET MUSIC. LIKE THE GLORIOUS MUSIC I HEARD IN MY HEART THE DAY I FIRST MET HER... *GLORIA... THE WOMAN I LOVE...*

JONATHAN, COME IN, GLORIA. A PLEASURE, I... OH, I'M SORRY! I WANT YOU TO MEET JAMES MRS. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD COMPANY. REED, MR. REED... FIELDING. MY WIFE, GLORIA...



GLORIA FIELDING WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN I HAD EVER SEEN. I THINK I FELL IN LOVE WITH HER THE MOMENT I MET HER. AND SHE *KNEW* IT. SOMETHING DOWN DEEP INSIDE HER SEEMED TO STIR, TOO...

MR. REED IS AN INSURANCE SALESMAN, MY DEAR. HE'S TRYING TO INTEREST ME IN A POLICY...

MR. REED LOOKS VERY CAPABLE OF INTERESTING PEOPLE IN... IN INSURANCE POLICIES, JONATHAN.

YOU FLATTER ME, MRS. FIELDING.



THE ATTRACTION BETWEEN GLORIA AND ME WAS LIKE A SNOWBALL ROLLING DOWNHILL, GATHERING MOMENTUM AND SIZE AS ITS SPEED INCREASED...

WELL, THANK YOU, MR. REED. LEAVE ME YOUR CARD AND I'LL CALL YOU...

YES, MR. REED. DO THAT.

OF COURSE. HERE YOU ARE.



I'LL NEVER FORGET THE LOOK THAT GLORIA GAVE ME AS SHE SAW ME TO THE DOOR OF HER SPACIOUS SHOW-PLACE HOME. IT WAS A LOOK OF HUNGER AND LONELINESS AND DESPERATION AND A THOUSAND YET-UNSAID WORDS...

WELL... GOOD-NIGHT, MRS. FIELDING. I... I TRUST I'LL BE HEARING FROM YOU...

I'M SURE OF IT, MR. REED. I THINK YOUR... ER... **POLICY**... IS JUST WHAT IS... **NEEDED!**



THAT'S ALL THERE WAS TO IT. A GLANCE... A SMILE... A FEW INNOCENT PHRASES... AND SUDDENLY THE INFERNOS IN OUR HEARTS WERE ROARING WITH THE FLAMES OF DESIRE. I WASN'T SURPRISED AT ALL WHEN SHE CALLED THE NEXT DAY...

MRS. FIELDING! HOW **NICE** OF YOU...

I'VE GOT TO **SEE** YOU. CAN YOU **GET AWAY** FOR AN **HOUR**? IT'S **IMPORTANT!** MY... MY **HUSBAND** WON'T BE HERE...



I SHALL NEVER FORGET THAT FIRST SECRET MEETING... THE UNCOMFORTABLE FORCED CONVERSATION SCALING THE WALL OF MUTUAL EMBARRASSMENT THAT STOOD BETWEEN US... THE SILENCE WHILE OUR HUNGRY THOUGHTS WHIRLED WITHIN US, TRYING TO SEEK EXPRESSION... AND THEN THE SUDDEN SURGE OF PASSION... THE BREAK-THROUGH...

DARLING... DARLING... FROM THE VERY FIRST MOMENT I **SAW** YOU...

DON'T SPEAK, JUST HOLD ME... KISS ME...



OURS WAS A LOVE THAT HAD SPRUNG SUDDENLY... AN EXPLOSION OF EMOTION... A PASSIONATE SWEEPING OF BODY AND MORALS. WE MET, WE LOVED. IT WAS SIMPLE IN ITS VIOLENCE. AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE...

HE'D **NEVER** GIVE ME UP. HE'D **HOLD ON** TO ME... **FOREVER**, BUT... YOU COULD... HAVE **ME AND HIS FORTUNE**...

GLORIA. I... I... **HUH?** YOU... YOU **MEAN**...



IT WAS A BLINDING LOVE. IT HAD NO ROOM FOR SOBER THINKING. IT WAS A CRASHING SYMPHONY AND I PLAYED BLINDLY ALONG...

IT WOULD BE SO **SIMPLE**, DARLING. THE **BALCONY** OUT THERE. **ONE PUSH...** AND...

BUT THAT'S **MURDER**, DEAREST. I... I...



YES, I PLAYED ALONG. THE **TUNE** WAS **DESIRE**. THE **THEME** WAS **PASSION**. THE **INSTRUMENT**... WAS **DEATH**...

MY WIFE FINALLY CONVINCED ME TO TAKE OUT THAT **POLICY**, MR. REED. NOW, ABOUT THE **PREMIUMS**...

GENTLEMEN, DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE MUCH **COOLER** ON THE **BALCONY**...?



THE PIECE HAD BEEN WELL-REHEARSED. WE KNEW EVERY NOTE, EVERY BAR, EVERY MEASURE. THE STAGE WAS SET. THIS MAD MUSIC WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN...

YES. WELL, AS I WAS SAYING, REED. I'D PREFER THE PREMIUMS TO BE LUMPED INTO ONE YEARLY SUM... SO...

JONATHAN! COME QUICKLY! LOOK...



MY HEART WAS A THUMPING KETTLE-DRUM. GLORIA'S VOICE WAS A CLASHING CYMBAL. JONATHAN HURRIED TO THE EDGE OF THE PARAPET AND GAZED DOWN INTO THE CITY CANYON BELOW... DOWN TO WHERE GLORIA POINTED...

WHAT IS IT, DEAR? WHAT DO YOU SEE?

NOW, DARLING! NOW...



THE MELODY, JONATHAN'S SHRIEK, FADED AWAY... FADED DOWN INTO THE CANYON... DOWN EIGHTEEN FLOORS TO A DEATH-FINALE...

THE CONCERT WAS OVER. JONATHAN LIVED NO MORE. GLORIA WAS FREE... AND SHE WAS MINE. SHE FELL INTO MY ARMS...

OH, JAMES! HIS SCREAM! IT... IT WAS AWFUL! AWFUL!

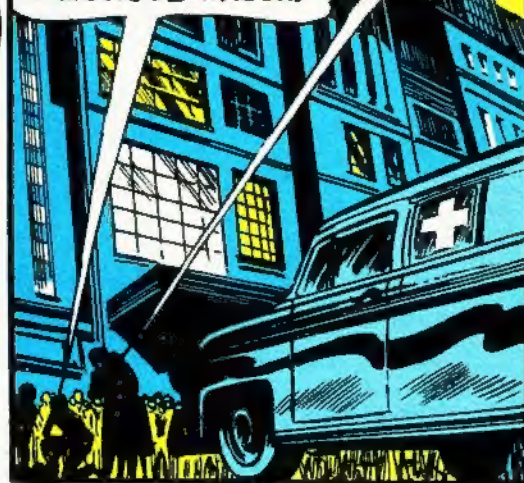
IT'S ALL OVER, NOW, GLORIA. C'MON! LET'S GO DOWN...



THE AMBULANCE-SIREN WAS AN ENCORE THAT SUNG INTO THE CANYON. THE INTERNE LOOKED AT JONATHAN'S BROKEN AND TWISTED BODY AND SHOOK HIS HEAD...

YOU DON'T NEED ME! YOU NEED A MORGUE-WAGON!

SOB... SOB...



THE POLICE CAME AND QUESTIONED US...

I... I'M JUST AN INSURANCE SALESMAN. I CAME UP HERE TO SELL MR. FIELDING A POLICY. WE WERE OUT ON THE BALCONY. HE... HE SLIPPED...

SOB... SOB... IT... IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! A HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE ACCIDENT!

THE POLICE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE OTHERWISE. THERE WAS NO MOTIVE. GLORIA AND JONATHAN HAD BEEN HAPPILY MARRIED. I WAS A STRANGER. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF FOUL PLAY. AND MY PARTING SHOT FIXED THINGS GOOD...

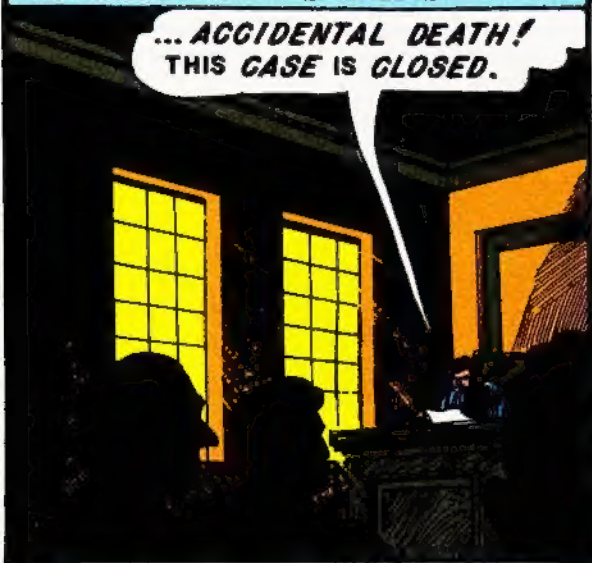
I'M SORRY, MRS. FIELDING. YOUR HUSBAND DIDN'T SIGN THE PAPERS. HE... HE WASN'T EVEN COVERED...

GET OUT, REED! CAN'T YOU SEE SHE'S UPSET ENOUGH ABOUT THIS?!



IT WAS OVER... DONE WITH. THE POLICE MADE THEIR REPORT... THE CORONER'S JURY DELIBERATED... AND THE REPORT WAS DELIVERED...

... ACCIDENTAL DEATH!
THIS CASE IS CLOSED.



AND THEN IT HAPPENED. WE WERE IN THE PENTHOUSE THAT NIGHT, CELEBRATING. THE PHONE RANG...

LET IT RING,
BABY

I'D BETTER ANSWER IT,
DEAR. IT MAY BE IMPORTANT.



I WATCHED GLORIA CROSS THE ROOM TO THE PHONE... BEAUTIFUL, DESIRABLE GLORIA... A WOMAN A MAN WOULD MURDER FOR. I WATCHED HER LIFT THE RECEIVER, WATCHED HER SOFT KISSABLE LIPS MOUTH THE WORDS, WATCHED HER FACE GROW PALE...

OH...NO! OH...
GOD, NO!

WHAT /S IT,
GLORIA?



SHE HUNG UP, SHAKING. SHE TURNED TO ME, FEAR WRITTEN IN WHITE ON HER LOVELY FACE...

IT...IT WAS A *MAN*, JIMMY!
HE... HE WANTS TO *SEE* US!
HE'S *COMING UP*. HE SAID...
HE SAID IT'S ABOUT MY
HUSBAND'S *MURDER*!

*MURDER?!
GOOD LORD!*



OUR PASSION-CONCERTO HAD HAD AN AUDIENCE. HE ARRIVED A FEW MINUTES LATER...TALL, DARK, SUAVE-LOOKING. HE STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE LIVING-ROOM, GRINNING...

ALLOW ME TO *INTRODUCE*
MYSELF. MY NAME IS
PAUL NICHOLS. I LIVE
OUT THERE...ON THE
TWENTIETH FLOOR
OF THE *BUILDING*
OPPOSITE THIS ONE!



HIS MOUTH WAS A GRIM LINE...HARD AND CRUEL. HIS EYES WERE GLUED ON GLORIA AS HE SPOKE, TRAVELING OVER HER, ABSORBING...

I HAVE OFTEN *WATCHED* MRS.
FIELDING FROM MY *WINDOW*...
WATCHED HER WITH A GREAT
DEAL OF *ADMIRATION*. I
HAPPENED TO BE LOOKING THE
NIGHT MR. FIELDING...ER...SHALL
WE SAY...*DIED?!?*



HE WENT ON...

I *SAW IT ALL*...*EVERYTHING!*
I *SAW YOU LURE HIM TO THE*
EDGE...I *SAW YOU PUSH HIM*.
I *KNOW IT'S MURDER!* I
SAW IT ALL.

WHY...
YOU...



HE HELD UP HIS HAND...

DON'T TRY ANYTHING! IT WOULDN'T BE WISE! I HAVE WRITTEN DOWN WHAT I KNOW, AND MY SEALED STATEMENT IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF MY LAWYER, TO BE OPENED IN THE EVENT OF MY UNTIMELY DEATH...

THEN... THEN THIS IS BLACK-MAIL!

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL! IF MY ATTRACTION TO MRS. FIELDING HAD NOT BEEN SO...SO COMPELLING, I MIGHT NEVER HAVE SEEN. BUT I HAVE...AND I AM READY TO DO BUSINESS.

HOW...HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT?

HE LAUGHED. HIS EYES NEVER LEFT GLORIA...

I AM A RICH MAN, MR. REED. I DON'T WANT MONEY!

THEN...THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT MRS. FIELDING!

GASP... WHAT? NEVER!

HE GRINNED...EVILY...LECHEROUSLY...

LET'S GIVE THIS MATTER SOME SERIOUS THOUGHT MR. REED...MRS. FIELDING. LET'S NOT ACT HASTILY...

YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND!

IF THE POLICE WERE TO FIND OUT WHAT I KNOW, BOTH YOU AND MRS. FIELDING WOULD DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR. YOU WOULDN'T WANT MRS. FIELDING TO DIE, WOULD YOU, MR. REED? YOU LOVE HER TOO MUCH FOR THAT. AND YOU, MRS. FIELDING. DO YOU WANT YOUR LOVER TO...

I'LL KILL YOU, NICHOLS, SO HELP ME!

WAIT, JIMMY! WAIT!

GLORIA LOOKED UP AT ME WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES...

I LOVE YOU, JIMMY! I DON'T WANT YOU TO DIE. I'D DO ANYTHING TO PREVENT IT. I LOVE YOU!

NOT THAT! I COULDN'T EXPECT YOU TO AGREE TO THAT!

PAUL NICHOLS SNEERED...

THEN I TELL
WHAT I KNOW!
IS THAT YOUR
DECISION?

NO. WAIT. LISTEN
TO ME, DARLING.
IT'LL ONLY BE FOR A
LITTLE WHILE. HE'LL
GROW TIRED OF ME. WE'LL
STILL HAVE OUR WHOLE
LIVES TOGETHER.

GLORIA...
SWEET...I...
SOB... I...
WON'T...
SOB...
LET YOU!



I COULDN'T HELP IT. I CRIED LIKE A BABY. GLORIA,
MY GLORIA. SHE WAS WILLING TO DEGRADE HERSELF
TO SAVE ME... GIVE HERSELF TO THIS FIEND...

ALL RIGHT, MR. NICHOLS.
WHAT ARE YOUR TERMS?

DURING THE DAY, I
AM AT THE OFFICE.
YOUR TIME IS
YOUR OWN. I AM
HOME AT EIGHT.
I EXPECT YOU TO
BE THERE... EVERY
NIGHT... WAITING...

NO!
OH,
GOD!
NO!



GLORIA HELD ME AS A MOTHER HOLDS A HURT SON...
PROTECTING... SOOTHING... RUNNING HER SOFT HANDS
OVER MY FACE, MY HAIR... HUSHING ME... LISTENING TO
HIS TERMS...

GO ON, MR.
NICHOLS.

THERE IS NOTHING TO GO ON ABOUT.
TOMORROW YOU WILL MARRY ME! AND NOW,
SINCE WE'RE ENGAGED, YOU MIGHT AS
WELL KNOW MY FIRST NAME. IT
IS PAUL.



I TOLD HIM... I TOLD HIM WHAT HIS NAME WAS.
EVERY VILE WORD I EVER KNEW, EVERY NAME
I'D EVER LEARNED, I CALLED HIM. HE SMILED AND
LEFT. GLORIA SIGNED...

LET ME KILL HIM, GLORIA!
LET ME...

THE STATEMENT,
DEAREST. REMEMBER
THE STATEMENT. HE
HAS US...



I REMEMBER THAT NEXTNIGHT. I
THOUGHT IT WOULD NEVER END.
THE WAITING. THE INTERMINABLE
WAITING. I PACED THE PENTHOUSE
FLOORS... SMOKED CIGARETTE
AFTER CIGARETTE... CURSED HIM...
AND CRIED FOR GLORIA...

AND TOWARDS DAWN, WITH SLEEP-
LESS EYES, I BEHELD MY LOVED
ONE AS SHE CAME IN...

GLORIA...
BABY...

OH, JIMMY... SOB...
JIMMY! I FEEL
SO... SO
FILTHY!

CHOKE...



SHE CRIED IN MY ARMS. SHE SHOOK
AS THOUGH SHE WERE COLD EVEN
THOUGH THE NIGHT WAS STIFLING.
AND I TRIED TO COMFORT HER...

DON'T GO BACK,
GLORIA. LET'S
RUN AWAY.
LET'S...

HE'LL TELL...
SOB... TELL...
THE POLICE.
THEY'LL FIND
US. NO! I
MUST GO ON
WITH THIS...



CAN YOU UNDERSTAND THE HORROR I'VE GONE THROUGH? CAN YOU UNDERSTAND THE PAIN...SEEING GLORIA RETURN EACH NIGHT...DEGRADED...HATING HERSELF...AND YET LOVING ME ENOUGH TO GO BACK AGAIN THE NEXT NIGHT.



IT WAS AN ORDEAL FOR HER, AN ORDEAL THAT SAPPED HER BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY...



AND IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, I WATCHED GLORIA GROW HARD AND NUMB AND COLD TO MY AFFECTIONS. AND EACH NIGHT, I WAITED FOR HER.



AND EACH MORNING SHE RETURNED... RED-EYED, BROKEN, PLEADING...

I CAN'T GO ON, JIMMY! I CAN'T. HE'S KILLING EVERYTHING. EVERYTHING. EVEN MY NEED FOR YOU...

NO! OH, GLORIA... GLORIA...



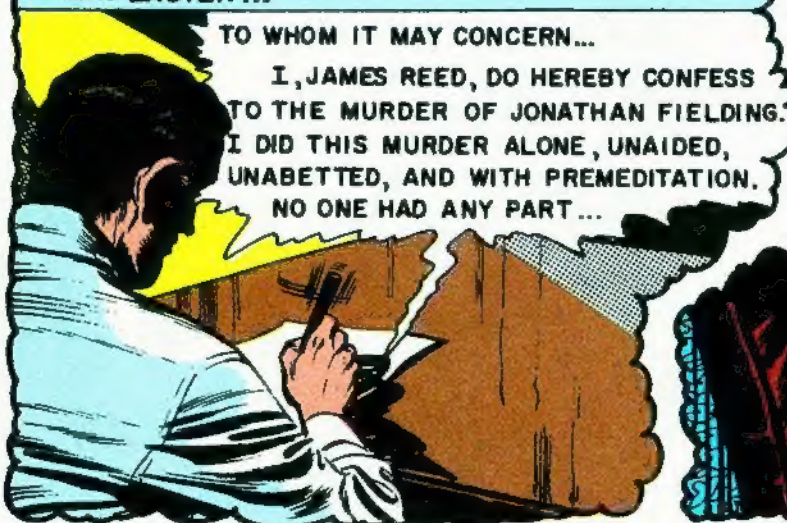
THIS MORNING, WHEN SHE LOOKED AT ME AND CRIED...



SO I CONFESSED TO THE CRIME. I WROTE IT ALL DOWN. I HAD TO DO IT THIS WAY. I WAS AFRAID TO GO TO THE POLICE. I DIDN'T THINK I COULD KEEP GLORIA'S NAME OUT OF IT AT THE TRIAL. *WRITING* IT WAS *EASIER*...

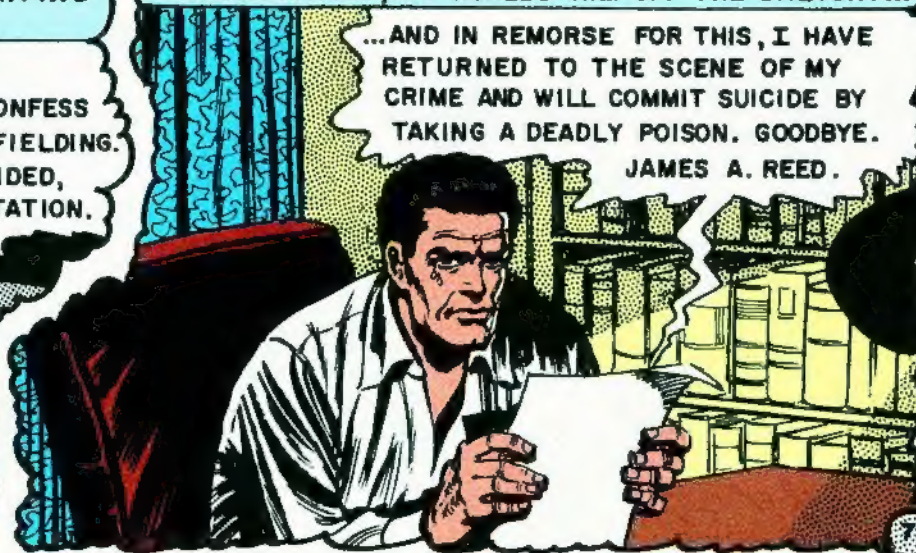
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN...

I, JAMES REED, DO HEREBY CONFESS TO THE MURDER OF JONATHAN FIELDING. I DID THIS MURDER ALONE, UNAIDED, UNABETTED, AND WITH PREMEDITATION. NO ONE HAD ANY PART ...



I CLEARED GLORIA COMPLETELY. I GAVE THEM A GOOD REASON. I TOLD THEM HE'D INSULTED ME AND THAT WHEN MRS. FIELDING HAD GONE INTO THE LIVING-ROOM FOR CIGARETTES, I'D HURLED HIM OFF THE BALCONY...

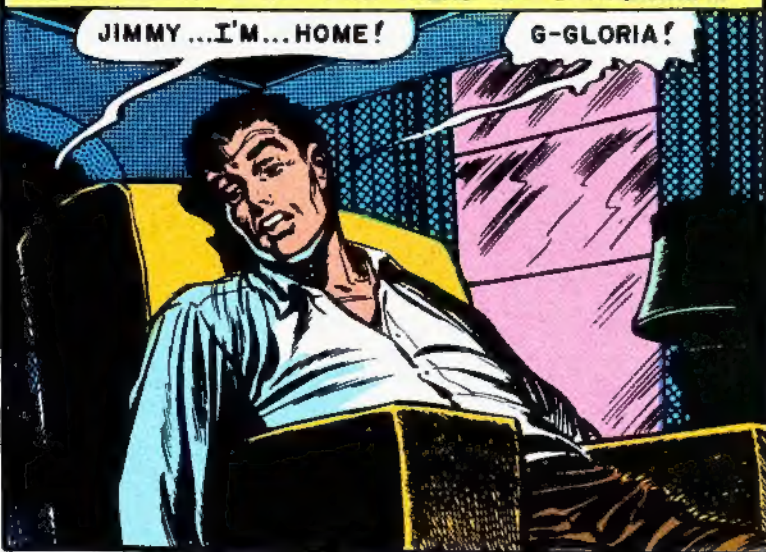
...AND IN REMORSE FOR THIS, I HAVE RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF MY CRIME AND WILL COMMIT SUICIDE BY TAKING A DEADLY POISON. GOODBYE. JAMES A. REED.



AND NOW I AM LYING HERE, WATCHING THE DAWN COME UP IN THE EAST, AND KNOWING THAT AT LAST, GLORIA WILL BE FREE. THE POISON WITHIN ME BURNS AND MY MOUTH IS DRY AND THERE IS A DARKENING...

JIMMY...I'M...HOME!

G-GLORIA!



I CANNOT MOVE. MY BODY IS NUMB. I CALL HER NAME...

GLORIA...

JIMMY! JIMMY!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!?



SHE RUSHES TO ME, SOBBING...

JIMMY...

I...TOOK...POISON...CONFESSED...
MURDER...YOU'RE...FREE...



IT'S FUNNY. A LITTLE WHILE AGO, THE APARTMENT WAS GETTING LIGHT. THE RISING SUN WAS STREAMING THROUGH THE WINDOWS. NOW, IT IS GETTING DARK ONCE MORE. I'M DYING. I KNOW IT. THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME...

POISON!? CONFESSION!?

SAVED...YOU! MAILED
CONFESSION TO POLICE.
HE...HAS...NO...HOLD...
ON...YOU...NOW...



IT'S STRANGE TO DIE. I SEEM TO HEAR LAUGHTER...GIRLISH LAUGHTER...GLORIA'S GIRLISH LAUGHTER...

WELL, IT'S ABOUT
TIME...

YOU...
CAN...
DIVORCE...
HIM...



AND NOW I SEEM TO HEAR HER VOICE...SNARLING AT ME...SNEERING...

IT'S ABOUT TIME,
SUCKER. I WAS
BEGINNING TO
THINK I'D SIZED
YOU UP WRONG!

HUH...



ALL IS DARKNESS NOW. THE LAST THING I HEAR IS A PHONE DIAL'S CLICKING...AND GLORIA SAYING...

PAUL, DARLING! HE'S FINALLY
DONE IT. HE'S TAKEN POISON
AND MAILED A CONFESSION TO
THE POLICE, ABSOLVING ME. YES,
DEAR. I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK!
I TOLD YOU I COULD FIND SOME
SUCKER TO MURDER JONATHAN
FOR US. YOU CAN PACK YOUR
THINGS AND MOVE UPTOWN NOW...
HERE...WITH ME!



THE
END

...so shall we reap!

THE MAN AND THE WOMAN SAT IN THE LIVING-ROOM OF THEIR MODEST FRAME HOUSE AND LISTENED TO THE OMINOUS TICKING OF THE MANTEL CLOCK AS ITS HANDS MOVED SLOWLY AROUND ITS FACE TOWARD ELEVEN. THEY SAT WITH BOWED HEADS AND BENT SHOULDERS AND CRIED-OUT EYES. THEY WERE IN THEIR FORTIES. THEY WERE WILMA AND MURRAY VORHEES... MOTHER AND FATHER. THEY WERE WAITING...

WHAT DID WE EVER *DO*, MURRAY?
WHAT DID WE EVER DO TO
DESERVE THIS? *HOW*
COULD HE DO THIS
TO US?

WE WERE *GOOD*
TO HIM, WILMA. ALL
OF OUR *LIVES* WE DID
RIGHT BY HIM. IT *ISN'T*
OUR FAULT. WE *TRIED!*



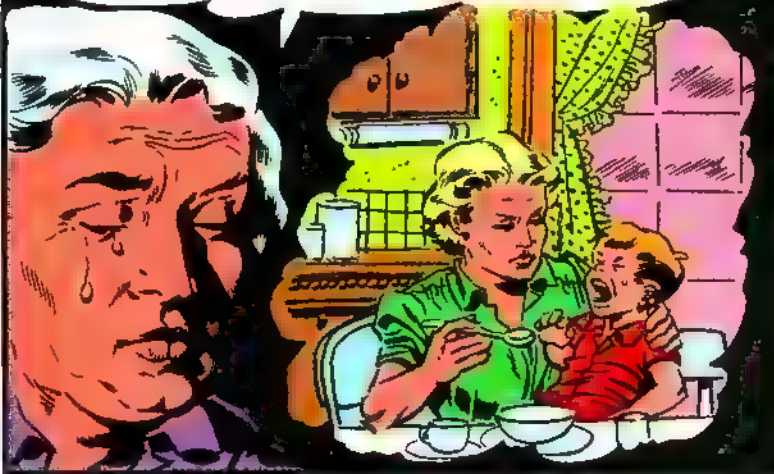
THE BOY SAT ALONE BENEATH THE GLARE OF THE OVERHEAD LAMP AND LISTENED TO THE OMINOUS TICKING OF THE WALL CLOCK AS ITS HANDS MOVED SLOWLY AROUND ITS FACE TOWARD ELEVEN. HE SAT WITH BOWED HEAD AND BENT SHOULDERS AND CRIED-OUT EYES. HE WAS TWENTY. HE WAS KENNETH VORHEES ... SON. HE WAS WAITING ...

HOW DID IT *HAPPEN*? *WHY* DID I TURN *OUT*
LIKE THIS? WHAT *MADE* ME LIKE THIS?
WHO'S TO *BLAME*?



THE MOTHER SHOOK HER HEAD SADLY...

WHEN HE WAS A *BABY* HE WAS *PALE...THIN...SICKLY*. I *WORRIED* ABOUT HIM...*TOOK CARE* OF HIM... MADE HIM *STRONG*. I USED TO *FEED* HIM *GOOD FOODS... WHOLESOME* FOODS. HE'D TURN UP HIS FUNNY LITTLE NOSE...*SOB...BUT HE'D FINISH THEM!*



'YOU WERE A *GOOD* MOTHER TO HIM, WILMA. DON'T EVER THINK DIFFERENT. AND I WAS A *GOOD FATHER*. WHY DIDN'T I *PLAY* WITH HIM WHENEVER I *COULD*? WASN'T I JUST LIKE A *BIG BROTHER* TO HIM?'

LISTEN, KENNY! WHEN I GET *THROUGH* WITH YOU, YOU'LL BE THE *BEST* FIRST SACKER IN *TOWN*. NOW *WATCH*, AND TRY TO GET IT *RIGHT*. FIRST...

YES, DADDY!



'WEREN'T WE CAREFUL ABOUT WHAT MOVIES HE SAW, THE BOOKS HE READ? REMEMBER THE DAY WE FOUND HIM READING THAT *CHEAP LURID COMIC BOOK*? WEREN'T WE ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR HIS OWN GOOD?'

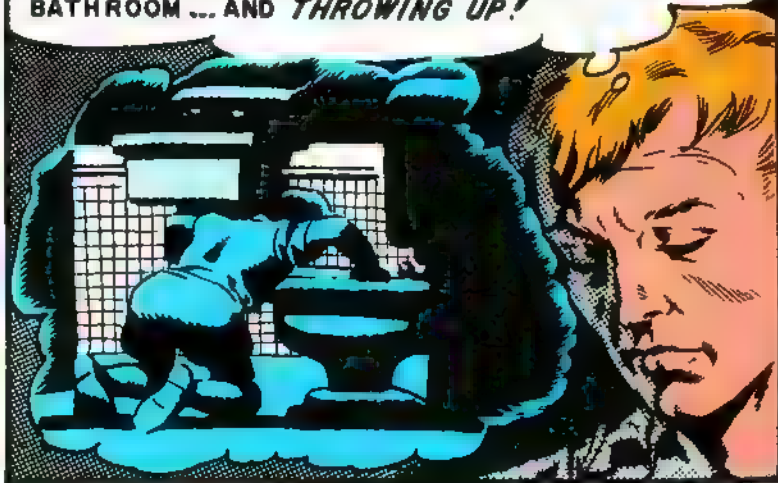
WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT'S A '*COMIC*' BOOK? '*COMIC*,' HAH!' IT'S NOTHING BUT *MURDER* AND *VIOLENCE*. I *FORBID* YOU TO *READ* THIS *TRASH*, UNDERSTAND? UNDERSTAND? THE *NEXT* TIME I CATCH YOU...

YES, MOMMY...



THE SON SHOOK HIS HEAD SADLY...

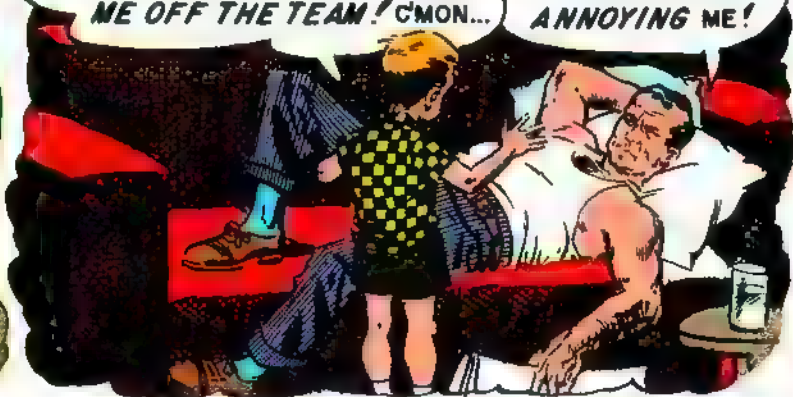
EVEN WHEN I WAS A *KID* THEY *MADE* ME DO THINGS I DIDN'T *WANT* TO DO. I REMEMBER MY MOTHER *FORCING* FOODS THAT I *DESPISED* DOWN MY *THROAT*. FOODS THAT *NAUSEATED* ME. I REMEMBER, AFTERWARD, RUNNING OUT INTO THE BACK YARD... THE BATHROOM... AND *THROWING UP!*



'MOM THOUGHT SHE WAS DOING RIGHT. AND DAD...DAD WAS A FATHER AT HIS OWN CONVENIENCE. HE'D PLAY WITH ME *RARELY!* ONLY WHEN *HE* WANTED TO...NOT WHEN *I* WANTED IT OR *NEEDED* IT...'

PLEASE, DADDY! THERE'S A *GAME* TOMORROW. IF I DON'T MAKE OUT *GOOD* THEY'LL *KICK* ME OFF THE *TEAM!* 'CMON...

GO AWAY, KENNY! I'M *TIRED!* LEAVE ME *ALONE!* STOP *ANNOYING* ME!



'THINGS THAT WERE WRONG FOR ME WERE PERFECTLY OKAY FOR MY FOLKS. I REMEMBER THE DAY THEY FOUND ME READING A HARMLESS COMIC. THEY LECTURED AND SHOUTED AND SCREAMED. BUT, THAT EVENING, AT DINNER...'

LISTEN TO *THIS*, WILMA. LAST NIGHT, TWO UNIDENTIFIED MEN BROKE INTO THE HOME OF MR. AND MRS. SO-AND-SO AND WHILE ONE OF THEM HELD THE HUSBAND PRISONER IN THE BATHROOM, THE OTHER... YOU KNOW... THE WIFE. THEN THEY KILLED HER AND *FATALLY* WOUNDED...

HERE! LET ME SEE THAT!





'DIDN'T WE TRY TO SHOW HIM THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN *RIGHT* AND *WRONG*? REMEMBER THE DAY HE SWIPED THE NEIGHBOR'S KID'S *TOY*? HOW WE *LECTURED* HIM... TRIED TO *TEACH* HIM THAT HE MUSTN'T *TAKE* THINGS, THAT DON'T *BELONG* TO HIM...'

BUT IT WAS IN THE *YARD*, DADDY. I JUST WANTED TO *PLAY* WITH IT A WHILE. I *DIDN'T* STEAL IT.

IT'S THE *SAME* AS *STEALING*. YOU *KNEW* IT WASN'T *YOURS*, AND YET YOU *KEPT* IT. THAT'S *DISHONEST*.



'THEY WERE ALWAYS SO *RIGHTEOUS*. THEY TRIED TO TEACH ME *HONESTY*. BUT DID THEY SET A GOOD *EXAMPLE* FOR ME? I REMEMBER DISTINCTLY, A FEW NIGHTS AFTER THE *TOY* INCIDENT, LISTENING TO MY FATHER *Bragging*...'

SO THERE'S THIS *WALLET* LYING *RIGHT SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD* WITH *TWO NICE CRISP TEN DOLLAR BILLS* IN IT. HEH, HEH. *FINDERS... KEEPERS*, I ALWAYS SAY!

NOW WE CAN GET THAT *LITTLE RADIO* WE'VE WANTED...



'AND WHEN HE STARTED GOING OUT WITH *GIRLS*? HOW WE TRIED TO MAKE SURE THEY WERE THE *RIGHT KIND*. REMEMBER THE TIME HE CAME HOME SO *LATE*? THE *LIPSTICK* ON HIS *COLLAR*!'

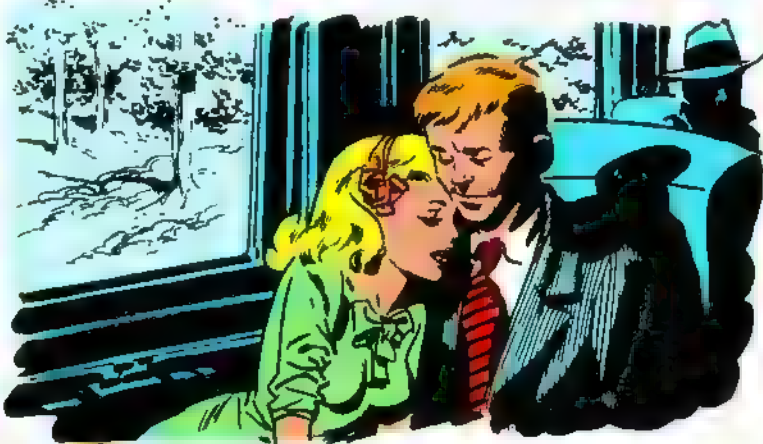
LOOK AT THE *TIME*, MURRAY! LOOK AT HIS *SHIRT*. HE'S BEEN OUT WITH SOME *NO GOOD TRAMP*!

WHAT WERE YOU *DOING*, SON? SMOOCHING IN THE *BUSHES*? NECKIN'? TRYIN' TO...

CUT IT OUT, DAD!



'SHE WAS THE ONLY *GIRL* I EVER *LOVED*. SHE WAS SO *SWEET*, SO *WARM*. WE WENT TO A *DANCE*. ON THE WAY BACK TO TOWN THE *BUS* BROKE DOWN. SHE FELL ASLEEP ON MY *SHOULDER*. THAT'S HOW THE *LIPSTICK* GOT THERE. BUT MY *FOLKS* HAD TO TURN IT INTO SOMETHING *UGLY*. SOMETHING *DIRTY* AND *DEGRADING*...'



'AND THE TIME HE *PICKED* ON THE *KID* DOWN THE *BLOCK*. A GOOD *SIX INCHES* SHORTER THAN *KENNY*. A YEAR *YOUNGER* AT LEAST. I WASN'T GOING TO HAVE A *BULLY* FOR A SON. *NOT ME*...'

THAT'S *RIGHT*! YOU'RE A *BULLY*! PICK ON SOMEBODY YOUR *OWN SIZE*... OR ARE YOU *AFRAID*?

YOU...YOU WOULDN'T *UNDERSTAND*, DAD!



'HE CALLED ME A *BULLY*. HE NEVER EVEN *ASKED WHY* I DID IT. I WAS A *BULLY* AND THAT'S ALL THERE WAS TO IT. AND IT WAS *WRONG* FOR ME, BUT *RIGHT* FOR HIM... TO BE A *BULLY*!'

HEH, HEH. YEP. OLD MAN *WILLKENS* CLOSED HIS PLACE FOR *GOOD* TODAY, *WILMA*. I PUT THE *SQUEEZE* ON HIM... *UNDERSOLD* HIM ALL THE WAY. HE COULDN'T *AFFORD* THE *LOSSES*. I *COULD*. TOO *BAD*! *SMALL MAN*! POOF...

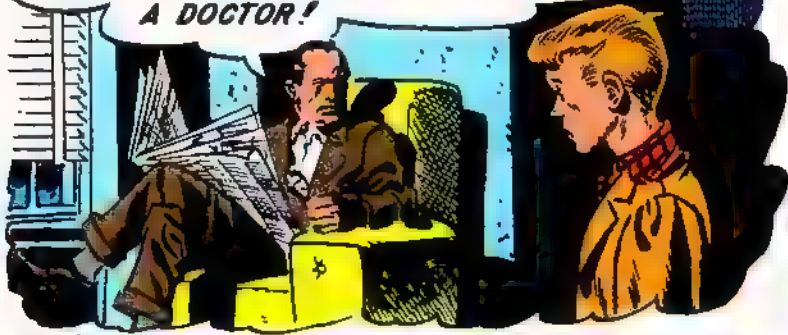




'HE NEVER APPRECIATED *ANYTHING* I DID FOR HIM, WILMA. THE STRINGS I HAD TO PULL TO GET HIM LINED UP FOR COLLEGE! THE PLANS I MADE! THE WONDERFUL PROFESSION I'D PLANNED FOR HIM. HE *NEVER APPRECIATED IT!*'

SON. SOMEDAY, I'M GOING TO BE *PROUD* OF YOU. I ALWAYS *WANTED* TO BE A *DOCTOR... BUT MY PA COULDN'T AFFORD* IT. WELL, *YOU'RE* GOING TO BE ONE...YES, SIR! I'LL *SEE* TO IT! YES, SIR! *MY SON... A DOCTOR!*

BUT, DAD!



'THEY NEVER *ASKED* ME ANYTHING. THEY *TOLD* ME. KENNETH, YOU'LL *DO THIS*. KENNETH, YOU'LL *SEE THAT*. THEY WERE ALMOST ABNORMALLY PROTECTIVE. THEY *NEVER* LET ME MAKE MY *OWN DECISIONS!*'

BUT, I DON'T *WANT* TO BE A DOCTOR. I'M *AFRAID* OF...*BLOOD...* IT MAKES ME *SICK*.

THEN YOU'LL GET *USED* TO IT! YOU'RE *GOING* TO BE A *DOCTOR* BECAUSE I *WANT YOU TO*, AND WHAT I *SAY GOES!*



'HOW WE SKIMPED AND SAVED AND DID WITHOUT SO THAT WE COULD PUT HIM THROUGH COLLEGE WHEN THE TIME CAME. HE NEVER COULD UNDERSTAND IT. HE WAS ALWAYS BITTER...'

I'M *SORRY*, KENNY. *NO MONEY*. NOT *ONE CENT*. WE'RE *SAVING...TO PUT YOU THROUGH COLLEGE!*

BUT I'VE *GOT* TO HAVE A QUARTER, MA! THERE'S A *BALL GAME* SATURDAY. WE'RE PLAYING *TWO-BITS* A MAN. I'VE *GOT* TO HAVE IT...



'COLLEGE WAS SO *FAR AWAY*. THAT *BALL GAME* WAS *MORE IMPORTANT* THAN ANYTHING TO ME. THE *REST* OF THE FELLOWS HAD *ALLOWANCES*. ALL I HAD WAS *PROMISES* OF A FUTURE COLLEGE CAREER. *SURE I DID WRONG* WHEN I *TOOK* THE MONEY. BUT...IF THEY'D ONLY BEEN *UNDERSTANDING!*'

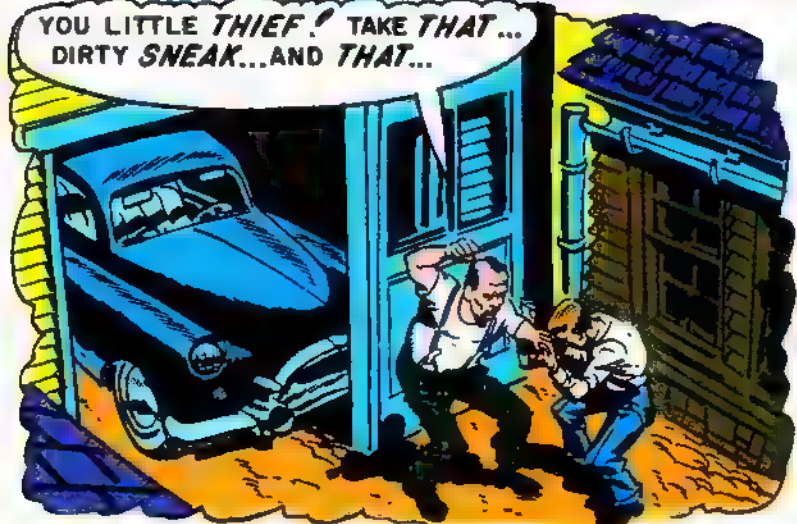
KENNY! WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?*

MA! I...I...I *HAD TO HAVE IT*, MA! THE *TWO-BITS!*



'THAT'S *RIGHT!* HE *STOLE* FROM YOUR POCKETBOOK! YOU CAUGHT HIM...AND I REMEMBER THE *BEATING* I GAVE HIM. HE *DESERVED* IT. WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THEN, WILMA... *WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!*

YOU LITTLE *THIEF!* TAKE *THAT...* DIRTY *SNEAK...* AND *THAT...*



'I WAS *SORRY!* I *REALLY WAS!* BUT I *WASN'T* A *THIEF*. I *WASN'T*. WAS MA A *THIEF*? DID SHE CONSIDER *HERSELF* A *THIEF* WHEN SHE'D GET UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO GO THROUGH *DAD'S POCKETS* AND *HELP HERSELF?* I SAW HER...'





'AND THEN HE JOINED THAT ROWDY GANG. THEY WERE BAD, ALL OF THEM. REMEMBER THE SCENE WE HAD... HOW WE FORBID HIM FROM GOING OUT AT NIGHT WITH THEM? HOW HE WENT ANYWAY...'

LOOK, MA...PA. GET **USED** TO IT. I'M A **BIG BOY**. I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF... AND I'LL DO AS I PLEASE.

KENNETH! COME BACK. KENNETH!



'THEY WERE A **BAD LOT**...THAT GANG. REMEMBER THE NIGHT THEY BEAT UP THAT BOY? KENNY JOINED THEM...**HELPED** THEM. HE WAS NEVER **BROUGHT UP** TO HATE MINORITIES. YET HE HELPED THEM. WHY?'

YOU **BUM!** YOU...YOU...WHERE DID YOU GET SUCH A **CRAZY NOTION**? THIS IS **AMERICA!** YOU **DON'T GO BEATING UP PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY'RE DIFFERENT...**

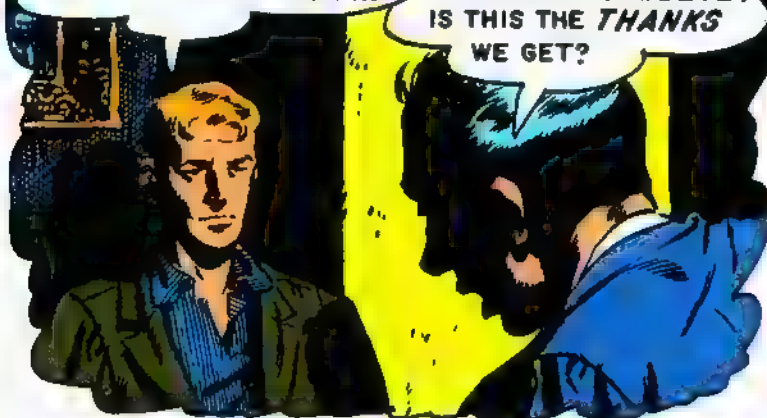
LEAVE ME **ALONE**, POP... I **WILL YUH?**



'AND THEN, WHEN HE FINALLY GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL, HE TOLD US... TOLD US HE'D MADE UP HIS MIND. THE **UNGRATEFUL SNOT**. THE **UNGRATEFUL...**

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M NOT GOING TO **COLLEGE!** I'M GOING OUT AND GET A **JOB**... EARN MY **OWN MONEY...**

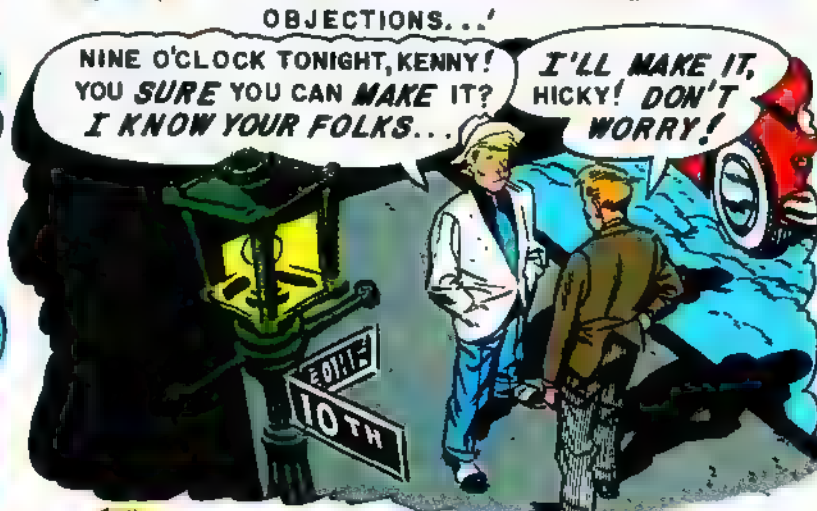
BUT WE'VE **SAVED ... SKIMPED...SCROUNGED** ...JUST TO **PUT YOU THROUGH COLLEGE!** IS THIS THE **THANKS** WE GET?



'I HAD TO GO. IT WAS MY TEST. I JOINED THAT GANG BECAUSE I ADMIRERD THE FELLOWS IN IT. THEY WERE ALL **INDEPENDENT**. THEY WERE **SYMBOLS**. I LONGED TO BE **INDEPENDENT** TOO. SO I WENT OUT THAT NIGHT OVER MY FOLKS' OBJECTIONS...'

NINE O'CLOCK TONIGHT, KENNY! YOU **SURE** YOU CAN **MAKE IT?** I **KNOW YOUR FOLKS...**

I'LL **MAKE IT**, HICKY! **DON'T WORRY!**



'HE WAS SO **RIGHTEOUS**, MY POP! SO **FAIR!** WHERE DID HE **THINK** I GOT SUCH A **CRAZY NOTION**? DID HE THINK I **MADE IT UP?** I **HEARD THINGS... IN MY OWN HOME, I HEARD THINGS...**

YOU LIVE IN A NEIGHBORHOOD FOR **TWENTY YEARS** AND **THEN...** JUST LIKE **THAT...** THEY START **MOVIN' IN**. YOU **WAIT**, WILMA. BEFORE YOU **KNOW IT**, THE **LAND VALUES 'ROUND HERE WILL DROP!** SOMETHIN' SHOULD BE **DONE!**



'I **HAD** TO GET THAT **JOB** AND EARN MY **OWN MONEY!** THEY COULDN'T **UNDERSTAND!** THEY **NEVER** COULD. ALL MY LIFE I'D **BEGGED FOR EVERY DIME!** I COULDN'T TAKE GIRLS ON **DATES**. I COULDN'T DO **ANYTHING**. THEY WERE ALWAYS **SAVING** IT FOR ME... I **HAD TO...**

HI, KENNY. HEY, WE'RE GOIN' TO THE **MOVIES** TONIGHT. GET A GIRL AND **JOIN US**. NO **STAGS**, NOW!

TH-THANKS, HICKY...IF I **DECIDE**, I'LL **MEET YOU...**



'I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM AFTER THAT, WILMA. I JUST DON'T KNOW. HE USED TO COME HOME AT ALL HOURS...SNAP AT US...DISAPPEAR FOR DAYS AT A TIME...'

KENNY!
KENNY...

YOUR MOTHER'S BEEN FRANTIC, KENNY. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN FOR TWO NIGHTS...

NO PLACE!
LEAVE ME ALONE!



'I WENT WILD WITH MY NEW-FOUND FREEDOM. IT WAS WRONG, I KNOW, BUT I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF. I WAS FEELING GROWN-UP AND INDEPENDENT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE...'

G'MON, KENNY, BABY! TRY ONE. JUST ONE PUFF! S'MATTER? SCARED, BIG BOY?

ME?! SCARED?! GIM'ME THAT REEFER!



'I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG WITH HIM. I KNEW IT THE MINUTE I SAW HIM THE NIGHT HE CAME HOME FOR...FOR THE LAST TIME. HIS EYES...'

I NEED DOUGH, MA. I NEED IT BAD. CAN YOU LEND ME TWENTY BUCKS?

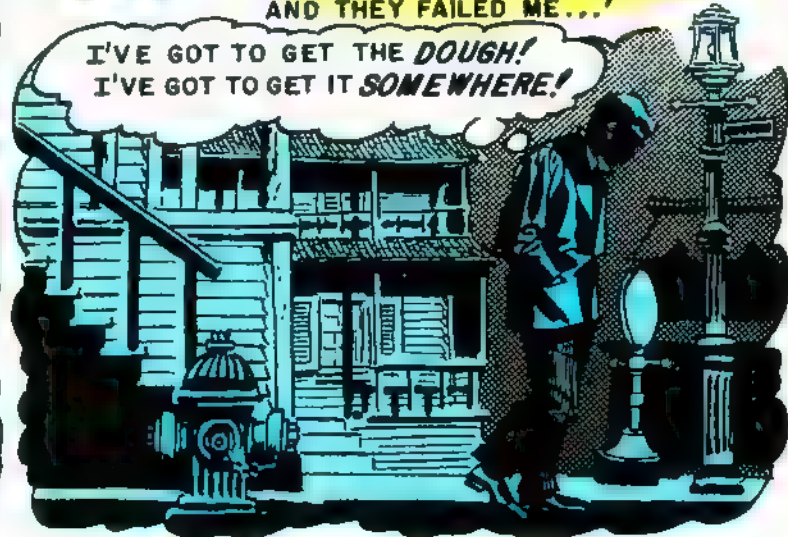
KENNY.
MY BABY...

GET OUT!
GET OUT OF
HERE AND DON'T
EVER COME
BACK!



'THEY FAILED ME! WHEN I NEEDED THEM MOST, THEY FAILED ME! THE REEFERS HAD LED TO STRONGER STUFF... UNTIL I'D BECOME AN ADDIOT. I COULDN'T PAY FOR IT. AND THEY FAILED ME...'

I'VE GOT TO GET THE DOUGH!
I'VE GOT TO GET IT SOMEWHERE!



'THE MINUTE I SAW THE COP, I KNEW KENNY'D DONE SOMETHING WRONG. I COULD SEE IT ON THE COP'S FACE WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR TO HIS RING...'

WHERE'S YOUR BOY, MR. VORHEES! I WANT HIM!

I... I DON'T
KNOW,
OFFICER!

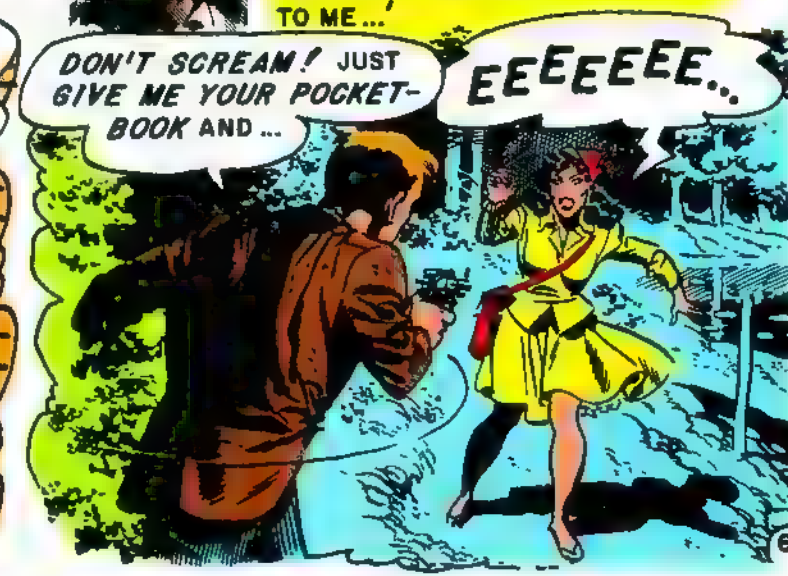
WHAT
DID HE
DO,
OFFICER?



'I'D WAITED IN THE PARK. WAITED UNTIL SOMEONE'D COME ALONG. I WAS DESPERATE. I HAD TO HAVE IT. AND ONLY MONEY WOULD GIVE IT TO ME...'

DON'T SCREAM! JUST
GIVE ME YOUR POCKET-
BOOK AND ...

EEEEEEEE..



THE MAN AND THE WOMAN SAT IN THE LIVING-ROOM WATCHING THE MANTEL CLOCK FINGERS POINT TO ELEVEN. THE MAN GRIMACED...THE WOMAN SOBBED AS THE CHIMES BEGAN...



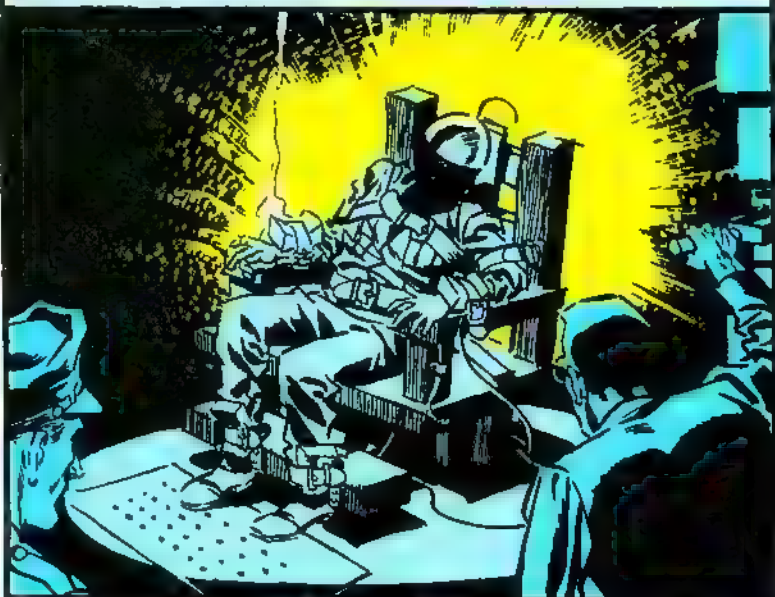
AND AS THE ELEVENTH CHIME ECHOED THROUGH THE HOUSE AND FADED AWAY, THE WOMAN SIGHED...THE MAN CURSED...

WHAT DID WE EVER DO TO DESERVE THIS? HOW COULD HE DO THIS TO US? WE... WE DID ALL WE COULD FOR HIM!

WHAT WILL PEOPLE THINK? WHAT ABOUT MY BUSINESS?



THE BOY SAT IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR FEELING THE FIRST SHOCKING HIGH VOLTAGE EXPLODE THROUGH HIS BODY...



AND EVEN AS HIS LIFE FADED FROM HIS BLISTERED AND SWOLLEN BODY, THE BOY WONDERED...

HOW DID IT HAPPEN? WHY DID I TURN OUT LIKE THIS? I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T LISTEN TO MY FOLKS. I GUESS...I WAS JUST A BAD SON.



THE END 7

SHOCK TALK

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Russ,

SHOCK #9 had more shock-value than a hairpin in an electrical outlet. It was great! My wife, Valerie, thought the cover on this one was absolutely horrifying, and I must admit that I could hardly disagree with her! Mr. Feldstein's genius for cover art never ceases to astound me.

"The October Game" was sure an eye-opener. I always thought that was just a couple of peeled grapes and some spaghetti which was being passed my way. Now I know better. "The Meddlers!" was a gruesome little tale as well. But for sheer gut-wrenching disgust, "Carrion Death!" just couldn't be beaten! It was horrible, awful, twisted, delightful, fun, tasty—um, maybe I better just stop there.

Jim Davis

Pullman, WA

I think that "October Game" by Ray Bradbury in SHOCK #9 was definitely the most horrific of all the horror stories that came out this July. What makes the story so chilling is the fact that this respectable-looking guy kills his own daughter just to get even with his wife. Bradbury does not completely spell it out for you at the end, but he makes you figure it out for yourself. One weakness of the three GhouLunatics is that they always explain the ending when they should sometimes let the readers figure it out for themselves. Like they say that a joke is never so funny when you have to explain the punchline to someone. The one notable exception where the GhouLunatics didn't hold your hand at the end was, of course, "Wolf Bait!". [HAUNT 13, yet to come] A company that I worked for once threw me to the wolves, but that's another story.

Speaking of "Wolf Bait!", here is a tip for Dave Rodriguez. You must carefully consider all of the available information about each of the four characters. Then you must choose which one that YOU would sacrifice, and that is the one that got thrown off the sleigh. For what it is worth here is my analysis of who the wolf bait is:

*

Warren Standifird

Sunnyvale, CA

Your analysis deleted for use when we run the story (in HAUNT 13). Down, boy!

Also available this month are CRYPT and WEIRD SCIENCE. Watch for VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED next month. Don't forget HAUNT, INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION and CRIME. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, \$3 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #3, \$1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, \$2 each. Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

We want MORE letters! Write to:
SHOCK
RUSS COCHRAN
POB 489
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES "#10" (AUG/SEP 53)

COVER by Jack Kamen

"The Sacrifice"

"...So Shall Ye Reap!"

"Home Run!"

"Sweetie-Pie!"

Jack Kamen

Wally Wood

Joe Orlando

Reed Crandall



A little glimmer behind the scenes of EC: We have no idea, specifically, why the change was made but the third panel of page 6 of "...So Shall Ye Reap" was changed between the time color guides were prepared and the book was printed. It is the color guide's panel we run here.

Perhaps coincidentally, perhaps not, SHOCK 10's letter page was to have been a diatribe against an accusation of obscenity in EC comics. As actually run, the 'editorial' shrunk to two paragraphs, dropped the word obscenity and apologized for having offended some readers.

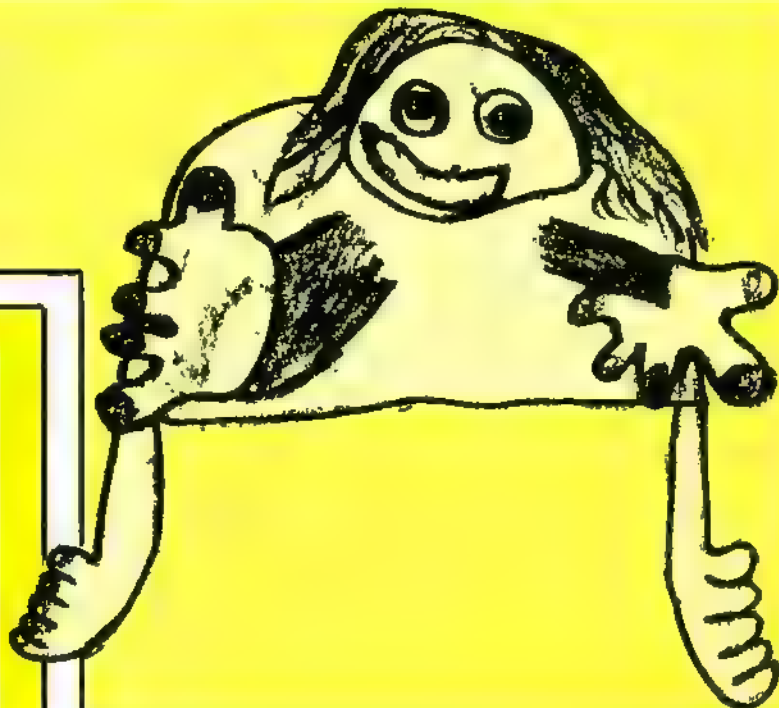
It would have been fun to have been a fly on the wall at 225 Lafayette Street that summer!

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)		
1. Title of Publication	2. Issue Date	3. Date of Filing
SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES	09/15/94	9/15/94
4. Frequency of Issue	5. Number of Issues Published Annually	6. Annual Subscription Price
QUARTERLY	4	\$8 US/\$12 PLR.
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Street, City, County, State and ZIP+4 Code) (Not printer)		
SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES, POB 469, WEST PLAINS HOWELL, MO 65775-0469		
8. Complete Mailing Address of the Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publisher (Not printer)		
GENSTONE PUBLISHING, POB 469, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775 0469		
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (This does NOT include names of all persons who have served in these positions during the year.)		
PUBLISHER: Russ Cochran, POB 469, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775 0469		
Editor: Name and Complete Mailing Address:		
NONE		
Managing Editor: Name and Complete Mailing Address:		
NONE		
10. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a corporation or other organization, its name and address must be stated. (Do not check this box.)		
Full Name Complete Mailing Address		
GENSTONE PUBLISHING INC 1966 GREENSPRING DR STE 300		
TIMONIUM, MD 21093		
STEPHEN A. GEPPI 1966 GREENSPRING DR STE 300		
TIMONIUM, MD 21093		
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities. If none, check box.		
NONE		
12. For Completion by Nonprofit Organizations Authorized to Mail at Special Rates (GNIA Section 742 (a)(2))		
The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of the organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes (Check one)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months		
13. Publication Title		
SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES		
14. Issue Date		
09/15/94		
15. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)		
12886		
16. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
17. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
14828		
18. Free Distribution by Mail, Carrier or Other Means		
0		
19. Total Distribution (Sum of 17 and 18)		
14828		
20. Copies Not Distributed		
3058		
21. Return from News Agents		
0		
22. TOTAL (Sum of 15, 19 and 21—Should equal net press run shown in 15)		
17886		
23. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete		
Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner		
bs mgr		
PS Form 3526 January 1991		

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters, to do so we need your address on the individual letter.

I've heard of Ingrown toenail, but not outgrown toes! Still and all, that must be me as a barefoot boy as drawn by Alex Bebout, Phoenix, AZ. This will be a special all-graphic issue of THE CRYPT-KEEPER's PAGE OF...

FINE ARTS #23



ANOTHER BOGUS comic cover, again from Sam Rowley, Anchorage, AK. Could that be the famous robot with a car battery for a heart, Adam Link? —CK



WHY IS this skull smiling? Because he's been hanging around the EC offices all day, and no one's mistaken him once for that ugly pug with the misshapen mug, The Vault-Keeper! —CK



"AND THIS YEAR— NOBEL PEACE PRIZE GO... TO... KRAGG!"

WHO SAYS we're not PC (Potentially Correct)? A thoughty thought-piece from Rick Olsen of Minneapolis, MN. I like it! (Will someone explain it to me?) —CK

WHY NO text pieces this ish? Simple. A job-related injury. I sprained my lips reading submissions. But I'll be better soon and when I am, look out! —CK

Send your contribs (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible doublespaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we edit!) to:

**THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S
PAGE OF FINE ARTS**

**RUSS COCHRAN
POB 469**

WEST PLAINS MO 65775

We welcome contributions. We cannot promise to return, acknowledge or publish contributions. We edit for clarity, accuracy and size. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication. To do so we need your address on the individual contribution.



The anaesthetist turned the wheel on the gleaming instrument panel, at one side of the operating table. There was an almost imperceptible hiss; when the quivering needle reach half-way toward the area marked FULL, the anaesthetist relaxed his grip on the wheel. He turned and nodded to the battery of doctors waiting tensely beside the surgery table.

"The patient is under the influence of anaesthesia," he said nervously, indicating the figure stretched silently before them. "The Generalissimo is ready for surgery!"

The anaesthetist stepped back, a nerve twitching at his temple as he eyed the grim men in bowler hats standing around the room like angels of evil. The Secret Police, the anaesthetist thought fearfully. Wherever the Dictator moves, these gunmen go also. The recent scandals about doctors murdering high government officials is making them redouble their vigilance. Imagine if something happened to the Leader while he was undergoing SURGERY . . . !

The Chief Surgeon spoke sharply, a flicker of fear in his eyes as he looked at the anaesthetist. Apprehension permeated the room as the anaesthetist stepped forward and examined the instrument panel. Slowly, with great delicacy, the anaesthetist moved the dial forward slightly, toward FULL. The hiss grew instantly louder, like a wave falling upon a distant beach.

There was a sudden grunt; without turning the anaesthetist was aware of movement behind him. It was a man in a bowler hat, his jaw set belligerently, barking out something

about having trapped a traitor determined to kill the Leader! The dial was perilously close to FULL when the anaesthetist was seized and heard accusations spat in his face. The control wheel, he realized just before he fainted from terror, had been jammed by the sudden motion. The louder hiss was ample evidence that it was stuck at FULL!

* * * * *

The Leader felt as if he was floating strangely, high over the vast lands he dominated. Through the curious haze that enveloped him as he floated, he was aware of a frightening heaviness inside his head, as if his skin were being stretched drum-tight. He tried to cry out that it was all a mistake . . . why was he swelling with such incredible speed, like a grotesque balloon? What was this strange hissing in his ears . . . this painful bloating . . . as if he was being pumped full of air? He tried to scream, but his mouth had become buried under deep layers of fat, his nostrils clogged with his own agonized skin. He was drowning . . . struggling frantically to gulp air into his tortured lungs . . . when the hiss grew in volume until all else was being blotted out by the ghastly roar in his brain. Then there was a dreadful ripping sound, and he felt himself spinning in a pool of blood . . .

* * * * *

The explosion reverberated through the shocked room. "T-The Leader!" whispered the Chief Surgeon in horror, looking at the gruesome mess still writhing on the table in front of him. The man in the bowler hat stared as if hypnotized, releasing the arm of the still unconscious anaesthetist, apparently unaware of the stream of blood that had splurged over him . . . of the still-jerking nerve ends that had splattered over his coat. "Our g-glorious Leader," he said in awe. H-He . . . he must've been overdosed with Gas! He B-BLEW UP!

HOME RUN!

THERE WAS A SILENCE SURROUNDING THE ROCKET-SHIP... A MAJESTIC SILENCE THAT ECHOED OF THE VAST VACUUM OF SPACE AROUND IT. INSIDE ITS GLEAMING HULL, THE FOUR EARTHMEN STOOD IN AWE, THEIR EYES GLUED ON THE VIEW-SCREEN BEFORE THEM, WATCHING MARS SWEEP TOWARD THEM... RED MARS, MYSTERIOUS MARS. FOR A WHILE, THEY DID NOT SPEAK. THEY ONLY STOOD, AS IF LOST IN PRAYER TO THE RUST-COLORED GLOBULAR IDOL. THEN, FINALLY, ONE OF THEM WHISPERED...

IN A FEW HOURS, WE WILL *BE* THERE... THE *FIRST HUMAN BEINGS* TO REACH MARS!

... AND WE OWE IT ALL TO YOU, DOCTOR MULLER! MANKIND OWES IT ALL TO YOU!

YOU SHOULD BE VERY *PROUD*, DOCTOR MULLER. WITHOUT YOUR *GENIUS*, MAN WOULD STILL BE GROVELING BACK THERE ON EARTH... FIRING *ROCKETS* BUT A FEW HUNDRED *MILES* BEYOND THE ATMOSPHERE... TRYING AGAIN AND AGAIN... AND ALWAYS FAILING! YOU, ALONE, HAVE CONQUERED SPACE.

THERE IS A *DRIVE* WITHIN EACH OF US, GENTLEMEN. A DRIVE TOWARDS A *DISTANT*, OFTEN *UNATTAINABLE* GOAL. MINE WAS THIS... REACHING MARS!



DOCTOR MULLER'S VOICE WAS SOFT, ALMOST SING-SONG. HE SPOKE AS IF HE'D OFTEN REHEARSED THE WORDS THAT FLOWED FROM HIS MOUTH. HIS EYES WERE GLUED ON THE RED-SPHERE LOOMING LARGER AND LARGER ON THE VIEW-SCREEN...

TWO YEARS AGO, THE MAN YOU SEE STANDING BEFORE YOU WAS AN OBSCURE ATOMIC SCIENTIST WORKING IN ONE OF THE MANY A.E.C. LABORATORIES. HIS JOB WAS MOSTLY ROUTINE... READING GAUGES AND DIALS, RECORDING, TESTING, REPORTING. HE WAS NOTHING BUT A COG IN THE HUGE MACHINE OF ATOMIC DEVELOPMENT.



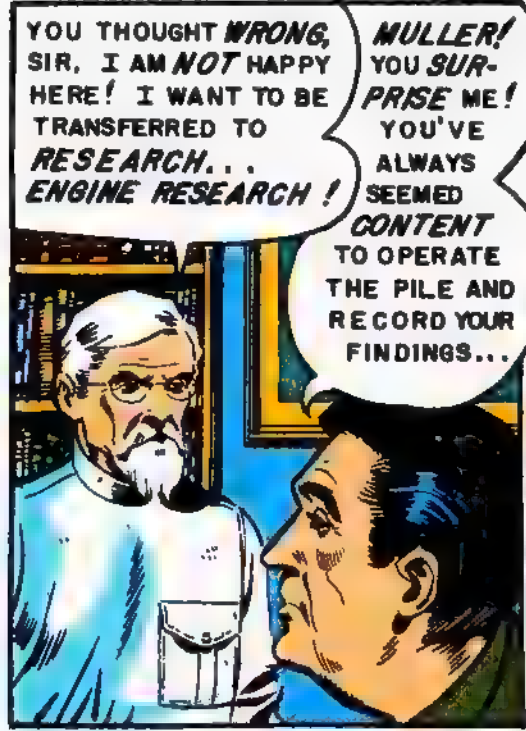
BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THAT OLD DOCTOR MULLER. SOMETHING CHANGED HIM INTO THE MAN YOU SEE. IT WAS LIKE AN AWAKENING... A REBIRTH. I REMEMBER HOW, ONE MORNING, I LEFT MY STATION AT THE PILE AND WALKED INTO MY SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE...

DOCTOR CAXTON. I WOULD LIKE TO BE *TRANSFERRED*!

WHA...? *TRANSFERRED*?! BUT, MULLER! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SO *HAPPY* HERE!



A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSORY



YOU THOUGHT *WRONG*, SIR. I AM *NOT* HAPPY HERE! I WANT TO BE TRANSFERRED TO *RESEARCH... ENGINE RESEARCH!*

MULLER! YOU *SURPRISE* ME! YOU'VE ALWAYS SEEMED *CONTENT* TO OPERATE THE PILE AND RECORD YOUR FINDINGS...



PERHAPS IT *SEEMED* THAT WAY TO YOU, SIR. BUT REGARDLESS OF HOW IT *LOOKED*, I *DESPISED* THE WORK. MY MIND WAS OUT *THERE...* ON THE *STARS...*

STARS? ARE YOU INTERESTED IN *SPACE TRAVEL*, MULLER?



I AM... *DESPERATELY!*

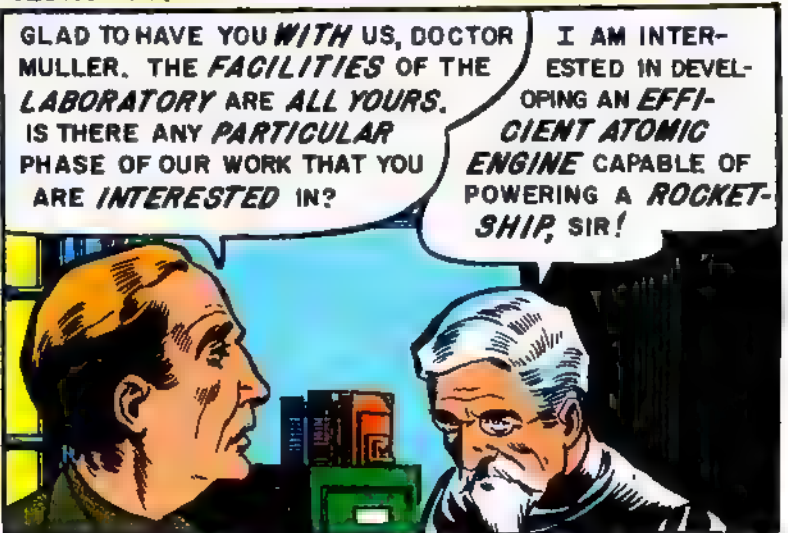
BUT *SPACE-TRAVEL* IS YEARS OFF. YOU MAY NEVER LIVE TO SEE IT.



SPACE TRAVEL COULD BE HERE *TOMORROW* WITH THE PROPER ENGINE. AND I THINK I CAN *DEVELOP* THAT ENGINE. I WANT THAT *CHANGE...*

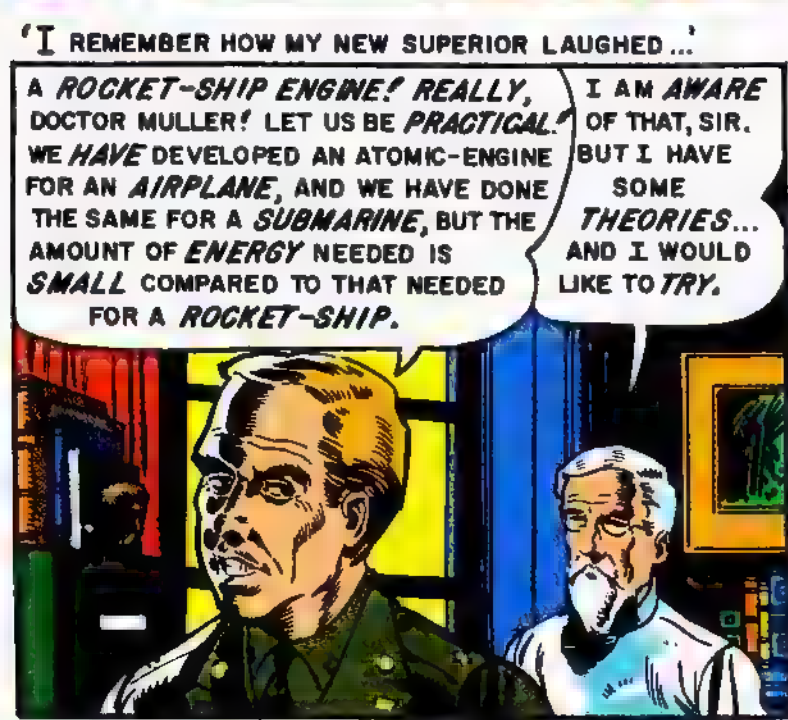
ALL RIGHT, MULLER. I'M *SORRY* TO SEE YOU *GO!* HEAVEN KNOWS YOU'VE BEEN A *DEVOTED WORKER*. AND, QUITE *FRANKLY*, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD IT *IN* YOU TO DO *RESEARCH*, BUT IF IT'S WHAT YOU *WANT...*

'AND SO, A WEEK LATER I WAS TRANSFERRED, AS PER MY REQUEST, TO THE RESEARCH DIVISION OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION, ATOMIC ENGINE DEVELOPMENT SECTION...'



GLAD TO HAVE YOU *WITH* US, DOCTOR MULLER. THE *FACILITIES* OF THE *LABORATORY* ARE *ALL YOURS*. IS THERE ANY *PARTICULAR* PHASE OF OUR WORK THAT YOU ARE *INTERESTED* IN?

I AM INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING AN *EFFICIENT ATOMIC ENGINE* CAPABLE OF POWERING A *ROCKET-SHIP*, SIR!



'I REMEMBER HOW MY NEW SUPERIOR LAUGHED...'

A *ROCKET-SHIP ENGINE!* REALLY, DOCTOR MULLER! LET US BE *PRACTICAL*. WE HAVE DEVELOPED AN ATOMIC-ENGINE FOR AN *AIRPLANE*, AND WE HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR A *SUBMARINE*, BUT THE AMOUNT OF *ENERGY* NEEDED IS *SMALL* COMPARED TO THAT NEEDED FOR A *ROCKET-SHIP*.

I AM *AWARE* OF THAT, SIR. BUT I HAVE SOME *THEORIES...* AND I WOULD LIKE TO *TRY*.



'...HOW HE SHRUGGED...'

ALL RIGHT. BUT I'M AFRAID OUR ATOMIC KNOW-HOW AT THE PRESENT TIME PROHIBITS SUCH A PROJECT. HOWEVER... IF YOUR HEART IS SET ON IT...GO AHEAD AND *TRY!*

THANK YOU, SIR.

'AND SO I SET TO WORK. IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS, I HAD COMPLETED MY DESIGNS...'

YOU ASKED TO SEE ME, MULLER.

YES, SIR. I HAVE SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE TO SHOW YOU...



'I SPREAD MY BLUE-PRINT DESIGNS BEFORE MY SUPERIOR...'

IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, SIR, THIS ENGINE WILL DELIVER A THRUST-FORCE CAPABLE OF DRIVING SIX TIMES ITS WEIGHT TO A SPEED OF SEVEN MILES PER SECOND...

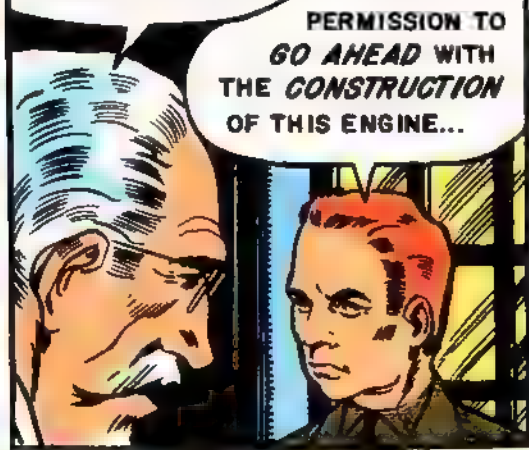
GOOD LORD. THAT'S... ESCAPE VELOCITY!



'I NODDED...'

YES SIR, ESCAPE VELOCITY... THE SPEED NEEDED TO BREAK AWAY FROM EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL FIELD...

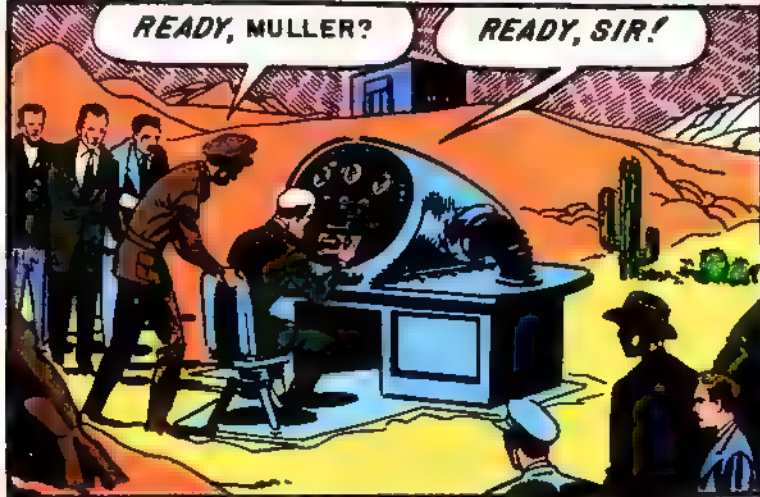
I... I'M SPEECH-LESS, MULLER. YOU... YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO GO AHEAD WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS ENGINE...



'WORK ON THE ENGINE BEGAN. AT THE END OF ONE YEAR, IT WAS COMPLETED. THE DAY WE WERE TO TEST MY ENGINE ARRIVED. IT HAD BEEN SET UP IN A DESERTED SECTION OF THE ARMY PROVING GROUNDS AT WHITE SANDS. A SMALL CROWD OF HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND ARMY BRASS WERE PRESENT...'

READY, MULLER?

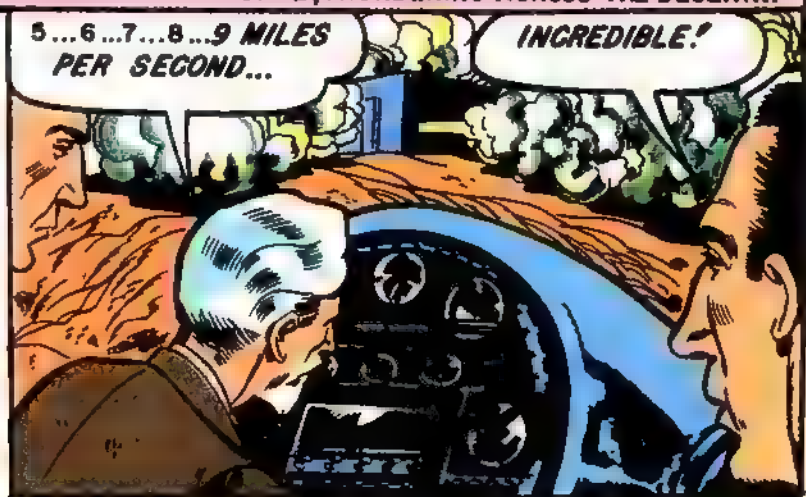
READY, SIR!



'THE ENGINE HAD BEEN ENCLOSED IN A SMALL SQUARE CONCRETE BUILDING LINED WITH SEVEN-INCH WALLS TO PROTECT THE OBSERVING PARTY FROM RADIATION. WE STOOD AT A SAFE DISTANCE, WHERE A CONTROL PANEL HAD BEEN SET UP. I THREW THE SWITCH. A DULL ROAR, INCREASING IN VOLUME, THUNDERING ACROSS THE DESERT...'

5...6...7...8...9 MILES PER SECOND...

INCREDIBLE!



'I TURNED THE ENGINE OFF. THE GROUND BELOW OUR FEET STOPPED VIBRATING. THE THUNDER ECHOED AWAY INTO SILENCE. THE GATHERED OBSERVERS LOOKED AT EACH OTHER...'

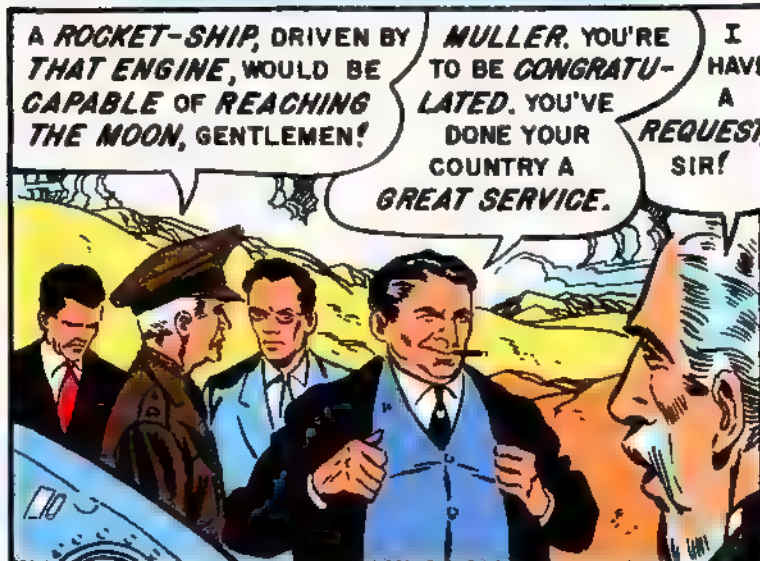
A ROCKET-SHIP, DRIVEN BY THAT ENGINE, WOULD BE CAPABLE OF REACHING THE MOON, GENTLEMEN!

MULLER, YOU'RE TO BE CONGRATULATED. YOU'VE DONE YOUR COUNTRY A GREAT SERVICE.

I HAVE A REQUEST, SIR!

I WOULD LIKE TO BE GIVEN PERMISSION TO HELP WITH THE DESIGNING OF THE ROCKET-SHIP WHICH MY ENGINE WILL POWER.

OF COURSE, MULLER. OF COURSE.



'AND SO, AGAIN I WAS TRANSFERRED... THIS TIME TO THE ARMY AIR FORCE ROCKET AND GUIDED MISSILE DIVISION. THERE, FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, ENGINEERS AND DRAFTSMEN WORKED ON THE DESIGNS AND SPECIFICATIONS OF THE FIRST ATOMIC-POWERED ROCKET-SHIP...'

MAY I MAKE A *SUGGESTION*, SIR. DON'T YOU THINK THE *EXHAUST BAFFLES* WOULD OPERATE MORE *EFFICIENTLY* AT A *GREATER ANGLE*?

HMMMM. WHY, I THINK YOU'RE *RIGHT*, MULLER. *YES!* YOU ARE *RIGHT!*



'I HELPED WHEREVER I COULD... MAKING SUGGESTIONS... REDESIGNING... CHANGING. FINALLY, ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION BEGAN...'

WELL, MULLER... YOUR *DREAM IS ALMOST COMPLETED*. IN *ANOTHER MONTH*, THAT SHIP WITH YOUR ENGINE WILL BE ON ITS WAY TO THE *MOON*...

AND, I HOPE, I WILL BE *ABOARD*. YOU WILL *SEE TO IT*, SIR, THAT I AM INCLUDED IN ITS CREW...?



IF YOU *INSIST* UPON *GOING*, I *WON'T* STAND IN YOUR *WAY*, MULLER!

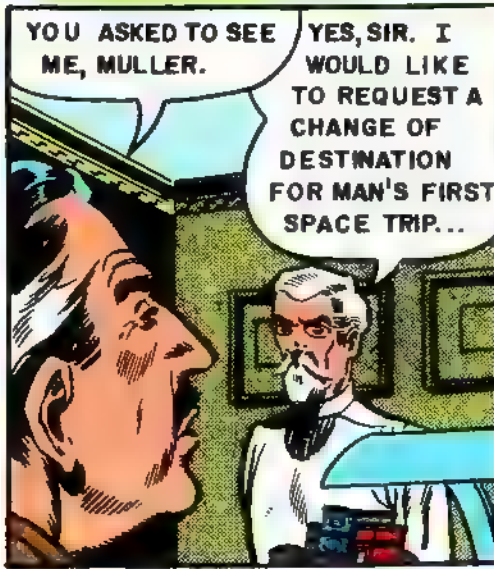
THANK YOU, SIR!



'IN A MONTH, EVERYTHING WAS READY. BUT I STILL WASN'T SATISFIED. I HAD ONE MORE THING TO DO...'

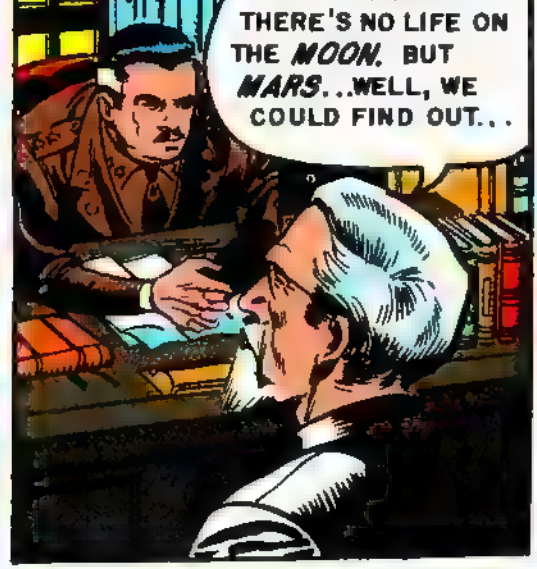
YOU ASKED TO SEE ME, MULLER.

YES, SIR. I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST A CHANGE OF DESTINATION FOR MAN'S FIRST SPACE TRIP...



CHANGE, MULLER? WHY?

OUR SHIP IS *CAPABLE* OF GOING TO *MARS*, SIR. WE *KNOW* THERE'S NO LIFE ON THE *MOON*, BUT *MARS*... WELL, WE COULD FIND OUT...



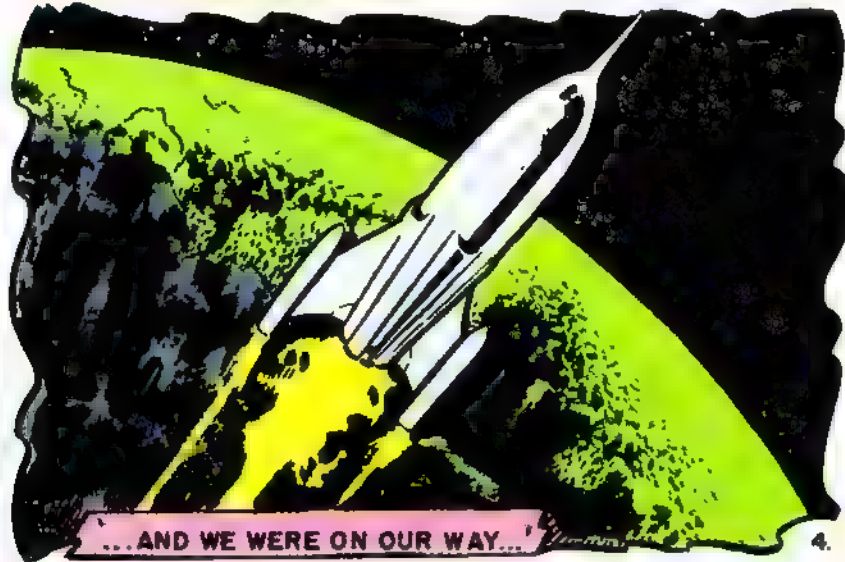
'YOU KNOW THE REST, GENTLEMEN... THE ARGUMENTS AND DEBATES. I FOUGHT DESPERATELY FOR THE MARS OBJECTIVE. *AND I WON...*'

STAND BY FOR TAKE-OFF...

CLEAR THE LAUNCHING SITE...



'THE SECONDS TICKED OFF. I THREW THE SWITCH. MY ENGINE ROARED. OUR MARS BOUND SHIP SHUDDERED, THEN LEAPED INTO THE STAR-STUDDED SKY...'



...AND WE WERE ON OUR WAY...

THERE WAS A SILENCE SURROUNDING THE ROCKET-SHIP... A MAJESTIC SILENCE THAT ECHOED OF THE VAST VACUUM OF SPACE AROUND IT. DOCTOR MULLER STARED AT THE NEARING RED SPHERE...

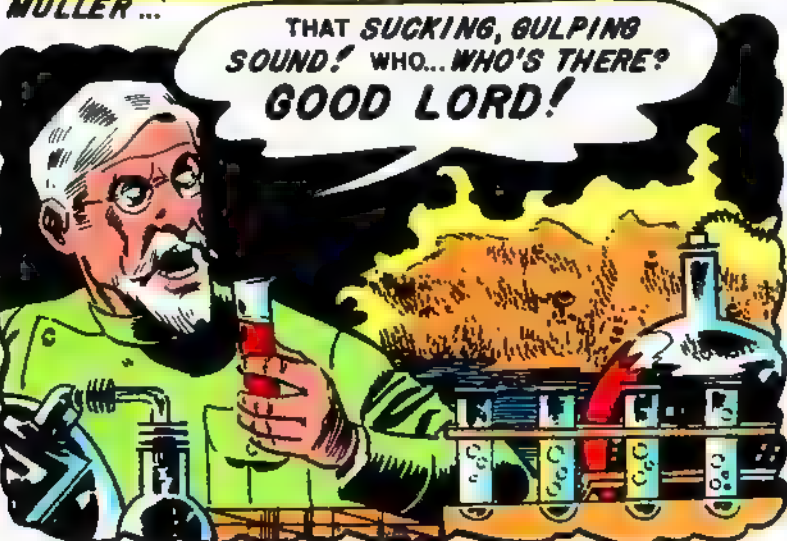


THE GUN THAT SUDDENLY APPEARED IN DOCTOR MULLER'S HAND UNDERLINED EMPHATICALLY HIS STATEMENT...

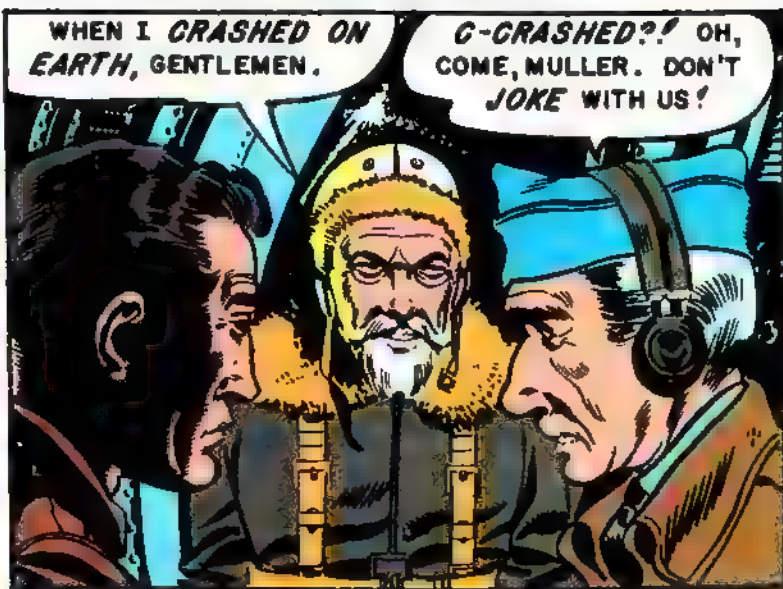
I'M NOT JOKING, GENTLEMEN! I CRASHED ON EARTH OVER TWO YEARS AGO! I TOLD YOU THAT THE MAN STANDING BEFORE YOU WAS AN OBSCURE ATOMIC SCIENTIST. WELL, HE WAS!



I MOVED ACROSS YOUR WORLD BY NIGHT, KEEPING HIDDEN, UNTIL I FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR. DOCTOR MULLER...



DOCTOR MULLER TURNED AND SMILED...



AND I... I AM A MARTIAN. MY TRUE SHAPE IS THAT OF AN EVER-CHANGING PROTOPLASMIC MASS CAPABLE OF ASSUMING THE SHAPE OF WHATEVER I ABSORB. I SLITHERED FROM MY WRECKED SCOUT-SHIP UNHURT...



AND I KNEW THAT I HAD TO GET BACK TO MARS... MY HOME... AT ALL COSTS. BUT YOU... YOU EARTHLINGS... HAD NOT DEVELOPED SPACE-FLIGHT. AND THEN I HIT UPON MY PLAN. I DESTROYED THE REMAINS OF MY SHIP...



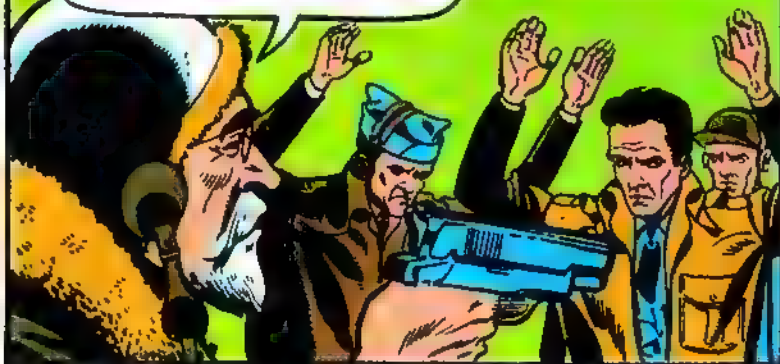
YES, GENTLEMEN. I PICKED ON DOCTOR MULLER. I ABSORBED HIM... ASSIMILATED HIM...



... I BECAME HIM... ASSUMED HIS SHAPE...

THE FIGURE BEFORE THEM, BRANDISHING THE GUN,
CONTINUED...

WHAT BETTER METHOD COULD I HAVE
USED TO *RETURN TO MARS* THAN TO *HELP* YOU
EARTHLINGS *DEVELOP* THE MEANS...*SPACE-TRAVEL*.
THIS WAS LIKE *CHILD'S PLAY* FOR ME. COMPARING
THIS TO THE SPACE-SHIPS *WE* HAVE IS LIKE COMPARING
YOUR *BICYCLES* TO YOUR *JET-PLANES*! BUT I
HAD TO BE *CAREFUL*! I COULDN'T AFFORD TO
AROUSE *SUSPICION*!



THE FIGURE POINTED TO THE VIEW-SCREEN...

IN A FEW MINUTES WE ARE GOING TO LAND. *OTHERS*
LIKE ME WILL BE WAITING... READY TO *ASSIMILATE*
AND *ABSORB* YOU JUST AS *I* HAVE *ABSORBED*
DOCTOR MULLER. AND WE WILL *RETURN*
AGAIN TO EARTH. IT IS THE
BEGINNING...

HE... HE'S
OUT OF HIS
MIND. HE'LL
KILL US!

THE STRAIN
HAS BEEN
TOO MUCH
FOR HIM...



IT WILL CONTINUE! THERE
WILL BE *MORE TRIPS*...
MORE ABSORPTIONS...
UNTIL *ENOUGH* OF US
ARE ON EARTH TO
CONQUER IT. YOU...

GET
HIM!



THEY STRUGGLED. A SHOT RANG
OUT...



DOCTOR MULLER FELL TO THE
ALLOY DECK FLOOR... A BULLET
HOLE IN HIS CHEST...

HE'S
DEAD! HE... HE WAS
A GREAT
SCIENTIST!

WE'RE LAND-
ING! QUICKLY!
INTO YOUR
SHOCK-
COUCHES!



THE SHIP CAME DOWN... KICKING UP THE RED DUST. IT
CAME TO REST ON THE RED-PLANET'S SURFACE. THE
THREE EARTHMEN ROSE FROM THEIR SHOCK-COUCHES...

MARS! WE'VE
REACHED
MARS!

TOO BAD MULLER
DIDN'T LIVE TO
SEE IT!

MULLER...?
HE... HE...
LOOK!

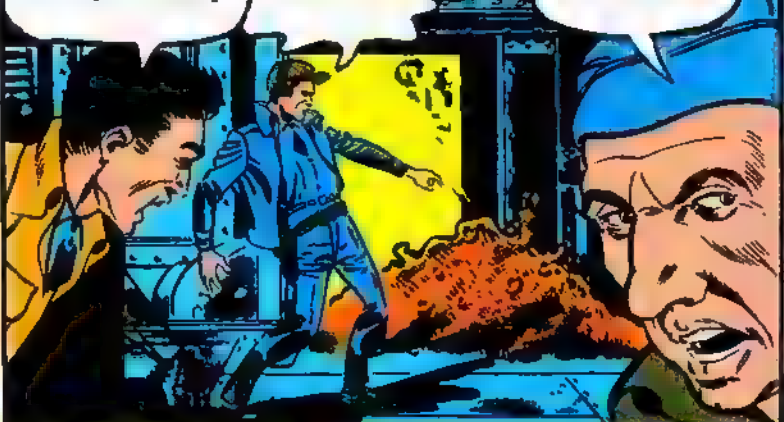


ON THE DECK, WHERE MULLER'S BODY HAD BEEN, THERE
NOW LAY A SHAPELESS QUIVERING PROTOPLASMIC MASS.

GOOD LORD!

HE... HE...

LISTEN!

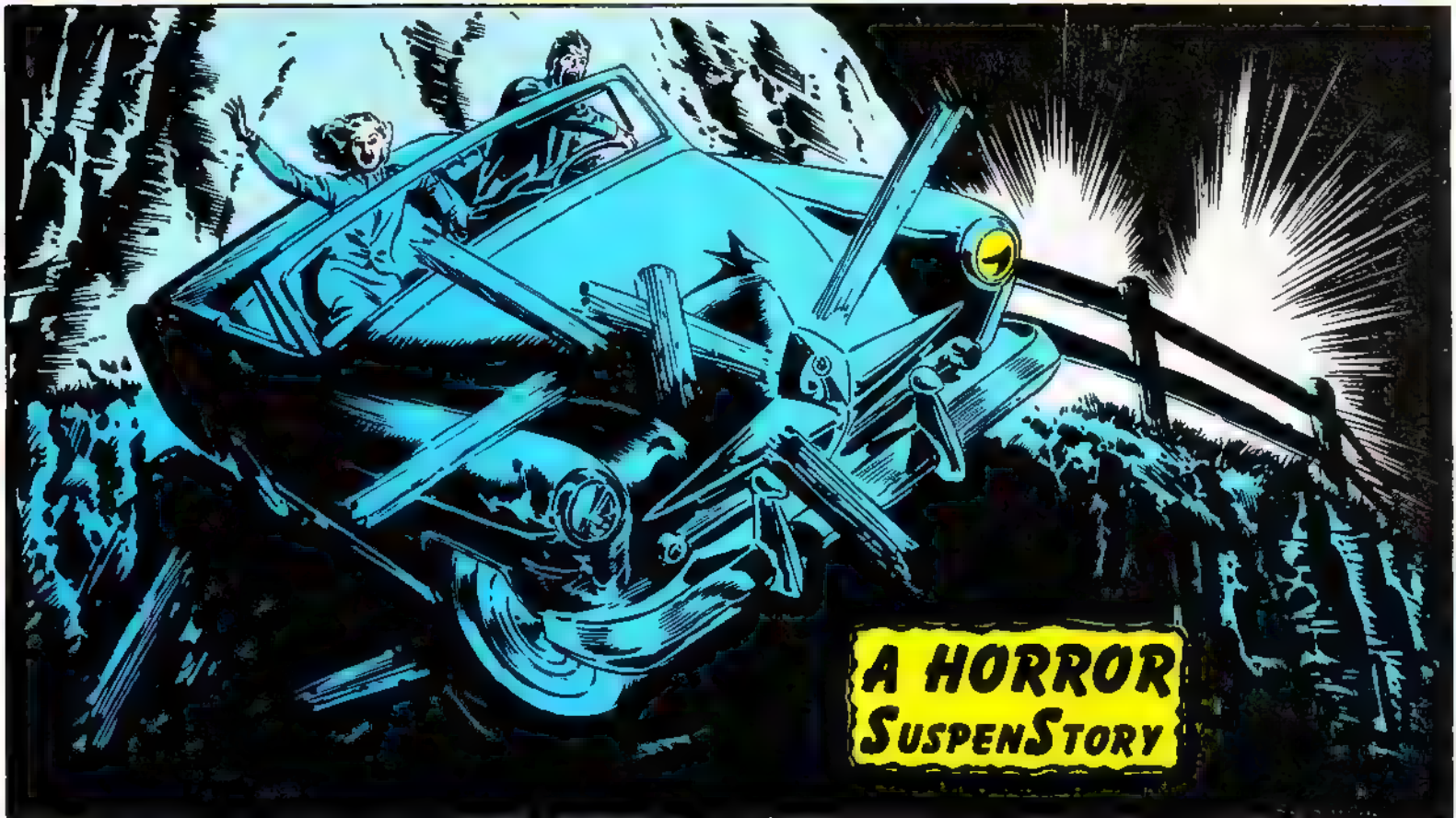


BELOW, THE THREE EARTHLINGS HEARD THE UNMIS-
TAKABLE CLANG OF THE SHIP'S PORT. AND THEN,
ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY, THE SOUNDS...THE *SLITHERING*,
SUCKING, *GULPING* SOUNDS...

THE END 5

SWEETIE-PIE

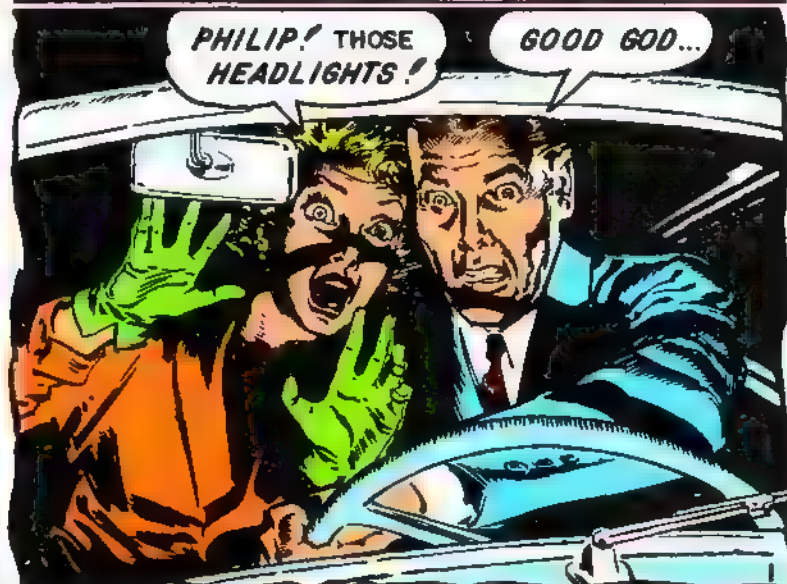
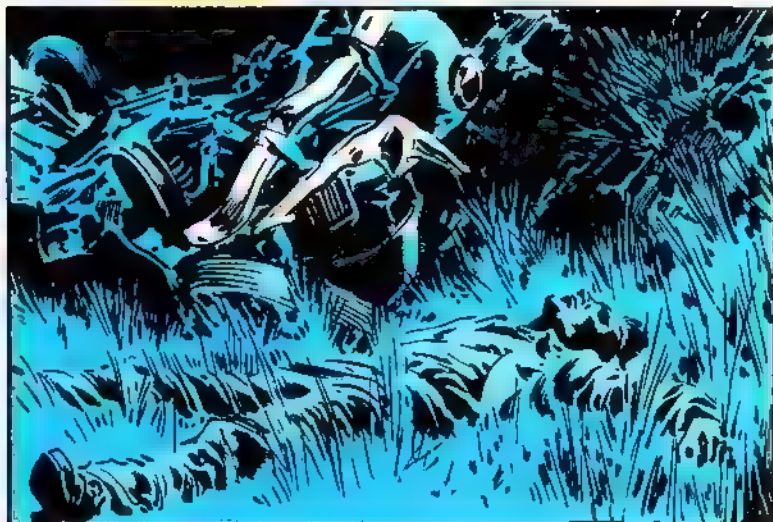
SALLY SCREAMED. PHILIP'S CRY OF DISMAY RATTLED IN HIS THROAT AS HE SPUN THE WHEEL OF HIS SPEEDING CONVERTIBLE...SWERVING TO AVOID THE GLARING HEADLIGHTS AHEAD...CAREENING OFF THE ROAD TO AVOID THE IMMINENT HEAD-ON COLLISION. THE CLOAK OF NIGHT WAS SUDDENLY PIERCED WITH THE KNIFE-BLADE OF SQUEALING BRAKES. TWO TONS OF METAL AND GLASS AND RUBBER AND HUMAN FLESH EXPLODED THROUGH THE GUARD-RAIL AT THE ROAD EDGE. THERE WAS A SPLINTERING SHRIEKING CRASH AS THE CAR LEAPED INTO THE NIGHT, OVER THE EMBANKMENT, AND DOWN THE SHEER FACE OF THE RAVINE...



**A HORROR
SUSPENSORY**

THE BLACK BLANKET OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS DESCENDED OVER PHILIP WHERE HE LAY IN THE TALL GRASS, THROWN CLEAR OF THE SMASHED AUTOMOBILE. IT DESCENDED LIKE A CURTAIN, CLOSING OFF THE NIGHT-SOUNDS ... STILLING SALLY'S SCREAMS OF PAIN ...

PHILIP FLOATED IN A WHIRLPOOL, SPINNING SLOWLY, REMEMBERING THE ETERNAL SECONDS BEFORE THE CRASH... REMEMBERING SALLY'S GASP...



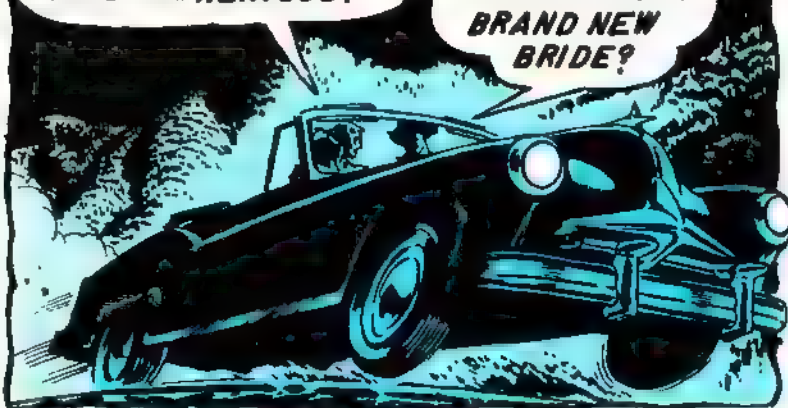
PHILIP! THOSE
HEADLIGHTS!

GOOD GOD...

THEY'D BEEN MARRIED ONLY A FEW HOURS, PHILIP AND SALLY. THEY'D BEEN SPEEDING NORTHWARD TOWARD THE LITTLE HOTEL THEY'D CHOSEN FOR THEIR HONEYMOON. AND SALLY'D WARNED HIM...

PLEASE, PHILIP, DARLING! DON'T *DRIVE* SO FAST! IT MAKES ME *NERVOUS*!

IS IT MY *DRIVING*, BABY, OR THE FACT THAT YOU'RE A *BRAND NEW BRIDE*?



PHILIP HAD TAKEN A WELL-EARNED VACATION FROM HIS JOB AS A REPORTER FOR THE CONSOLIDATED PRESS SERVICE TO MARRY SALLY. HE'D LEFT IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT A BIG STORY HE'D BEEN WORKING ON HAD NOT, AS YET, BEEN CONCLUDED...

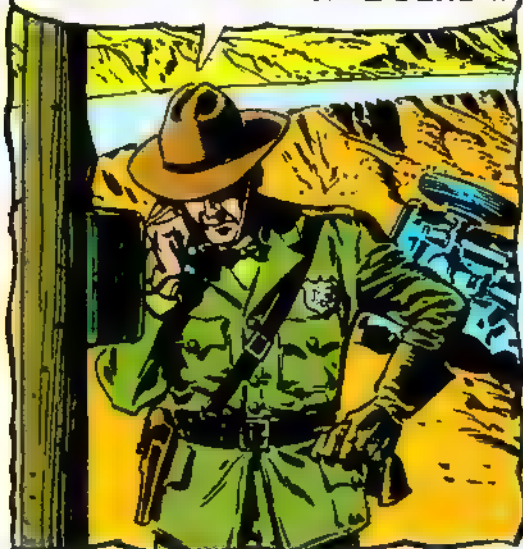
WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, YOU'RE *GETTING MARRIED*?! HERE WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE *BIGGEST STORY* TO COME FROM THESE PARTS IN *YEARS*, AND YOU WANT TO *TAKE OFF*!

PUT *WILLIAMS* ON IT, CHIEF. I HAVE A HUNCH IT *WON'T BREAK* TILL I GET BACK *ANYWAY*!



PHILIP'S STORY HAD BEEN A GORY ONE. THERE'D BEEN SEVERAL SERIOUS AUTOMOBILE WRECKS IN THE AREA... AND ALL OF THEM WERE THE SAME...

THIS IS O'HARA... STATE PATROL. YEAH. *ANOTHER ONE*! PILED UP ON ROUTE NINE ABOUT SEVEN MILES OUT. YEAH. *SAME DEAL*...



NO BODIES IN THE WRECK. NOT A *SIGN* OF ONE... *ANYWHERE AROUND*.



WHEREVER THESE WRECKS OCCURRED... AND THEY'D BECOME MORE AND MORE FREQUENT... THE VICTIMS HAD JUST DISAPPEARED...

PEOPLE JUST DON'T *WALK AWAY* FROM SMASH-UPS LIKE *THAT*, PHIL. NOT *EVERY TIME*! SOME OF THOSE WRECKS WERE BAD ENOUGH TO *KILL*... YET THERE WEREN'T ANY *BODIES*! GET *ON THIS*, EH, BOY? SEE WHAT YOU CAN *DIG UP*!

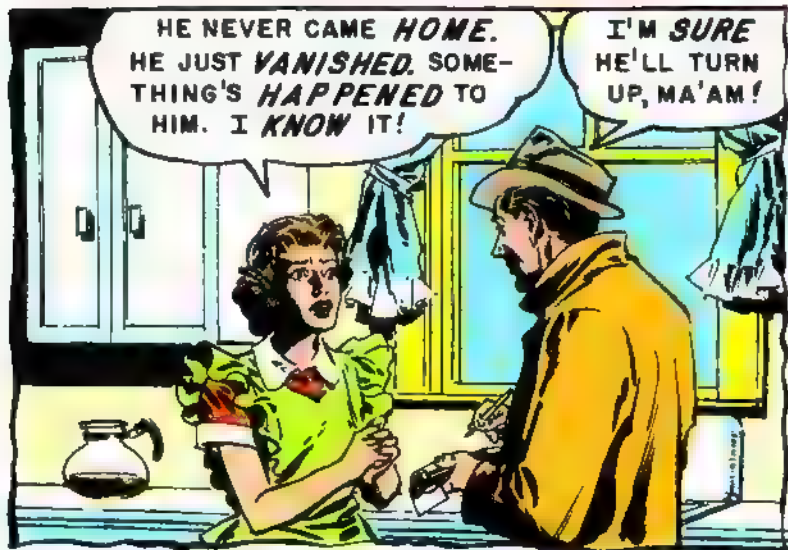
VERY FUNNY! OKAY, CHIEF.



AFTER EACH WRECK, THE OWNER OF THE CAR HAD BEEN TRACED THROUGH THE REGISTRATION. PHIL HAD INTERVIEWED THE FAMILY OF ONE...

HE NEVER CAME *HOME*. HE JUST *VANISHED*. SOMETHING'S *HAPPENED* TO HIM. I *KNOW* IT!

I'M *SURE* HE'LL TURN UP, MA'AM!



AND THEN THE FIRST BODY'D BEEN FOUND... WEEKS LATER... MILES FROM THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT...

MAMA. DADDY. COME QUICK. LOOK. A MAN... SLEEPING.

WHERE? WHA... CHOKES...



HE'D BEEN DRIVING ONE OF THE CAR'S THAT HAD BEEN WRECKED. HE'D BEEN A HIGH-SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. THEY'D TAKEN HIS CORPSE INTO TOWN TO THE MORGUE...PERFORMED AN AUTOPSY...

HIS BLOOD HAS BEEN COMPLETELY DRAINED FROM HIS BODY. NOTICE THE TWO PUNCTURE MARKS IN HIS THROAT...



ONE OF PHILIP'S FELLOW REPORTERS...NOTED FOR HIS SENSE OF HUMOR...HAD INTIMATED ...

IT'S THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE, PHIL, OL' BOY! A VAMPIRE!

YOU'RE CRAZY, EDDIE. VAMPIRES ARE MYTHS.



BUT MORE BODIES BEGAN TO APPEAR, SCATTERED ABOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND EACH OF THEM BORE...

...THE SAME TWO PUNCTURE-MARKS IN THE THROAT!

SEE, PHILLY? WHAT DO YOU SAY NOW?!



IT WAS CRAZY, BUT WHAT ELSE COULD PHILIP BELIEVE...

A VAMPIRE! BAH! YOU'VE BEEN SEEING TOO MANY 'B' PICTURES!

THEN YOU EXPLAIN IT, CHIEF. EACH OF THE BODIES FOUND HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN ONE OF THOSE AUTO-MOBILE WRECKS WE'VE BEEN HAVING. AND EACH OF THEM WAS DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD! GOT A BETTER ANSWER?



THE CHIEF HAD LAUGHED...

AND I SUPPOSE YOUR VAMPIRE CAUSED THOSE WRECKS SO IT COULD OBTAIN VICTIMS...

I HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT, BUT IT'S AS GOOD A REASON AS ANY!



THE POLICE HAD LAUGHED AT PHILIP'S THEORY...

WE'VE ONLY RECOVERED FOUR BODIES SO FAR, PHIL. WE'VE HAD OVER TEN WRECKS. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THAT?

THE OTHER VICTIMS WILL TURN UP SOON. YOU'LL SEE, LIEUTENANT!



BUT PHIL'D BEEN WRONG. THERE'D BEEN MORE WRECKS, BUT OUT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER, FOURTEEN, ONLY SIX BODIES HAD BEEN FOUND...

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, SALLY! WHY HAVEN'T THEY FOUND THE OTHER BODIES INVOLVED IN THE WRECKS?

WHY CAN'T YOU FORGET YOUR GRUESOME STORY AND COME KISS ME, HONEY?



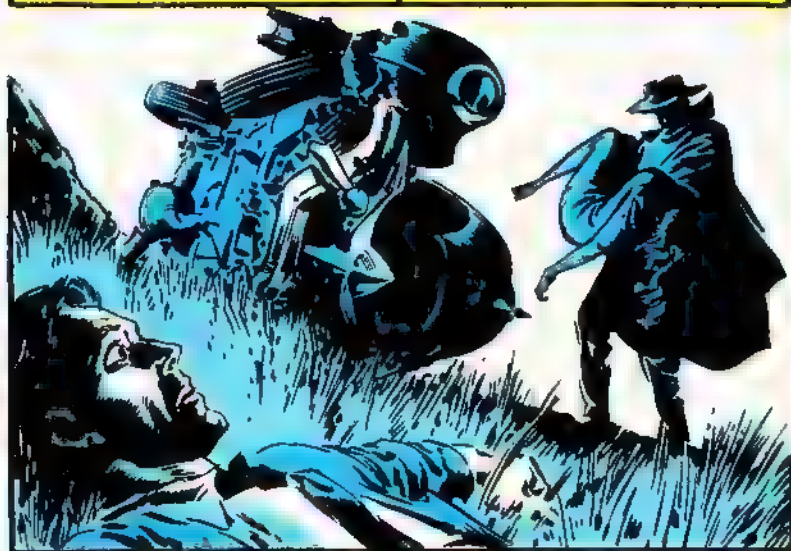
GONE. YEP. GONE. NOT A TRACE. BETTER SEND THE WRECKING CREW AROUND. WE'LL COMB THE AREA JUST IN CASE...

THEY'VE GOT TO LISTEN TO ME, NOW, SALLY. THEY'VE GOT TO. IT IS A VAMPIRE.

PHIL, I'VE WAITED AS LONG AS I CAN! IF YOU DON'T MARRY ME TOMORROW

A man in a yellow suit is being pulled into a blue, swirling vortex. The man is in the center of the frame, his body stretched out as he is drawn into the center of the swirling blue lines. The vortex is composed of many concentric, swirling lines that create a sense of motion and depth. The man's suit is a bright yellow, contrasting sharply with the deep blue of the vortex. The overall effect is one of a powerful, irresistible force pulling the man in.

PHILIP OPENED HIS EYES. THE BLANKET LIFTED. HE LOOKED TOWARD THE MASS OF TWISTED STEEL AND SMASHED GLASS AND TORN CANVAS THAT HAD ONCE BEEN HIS CONVERTIBLE. HE SAW THE FIGURE BEND OVER SALLY'S STILL BODY, LIFTING IT...



HE TRIED TO CRY OUT. NO SOUND CAME FROM HIS THROAT. HE TRIED TO MOVE. HE WAS PARALYZED. HE COULD ONLY LIE THERE WATCHING THE FIGURE CARRY SALLY BACK UP THE SLOPE TO THE WAITING STATION-WAGON...



HE COULD ONLY LIE AND WAIT UNTIL THE FIGURE RETURNED FOR HIM...



HE FELT HIMSELF LIFTED, CARRIED, FLUNG INTO THE REAR OF THE STATION WAGON BESIDE SALLY'S MOTIONLESS BODY...



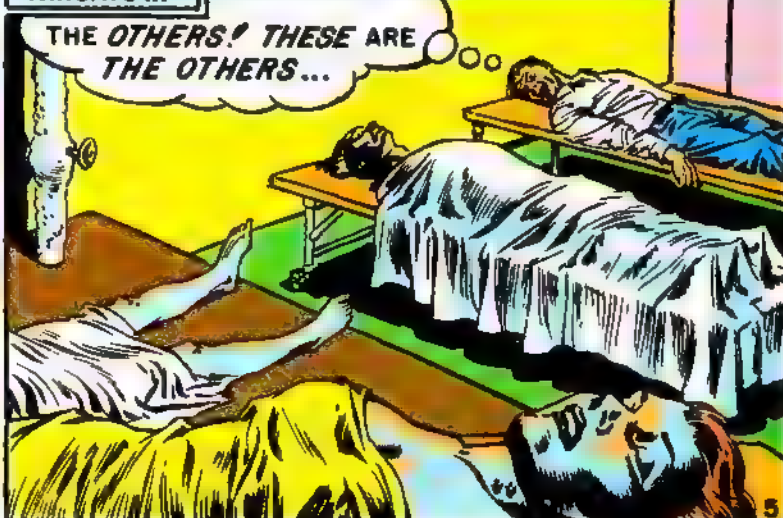
AND THEN, THE BLANKET DESCENDED ONCE MORE WITH THE MESHING OF GEARS AS THE STATION WAGON PULLED AWAY...



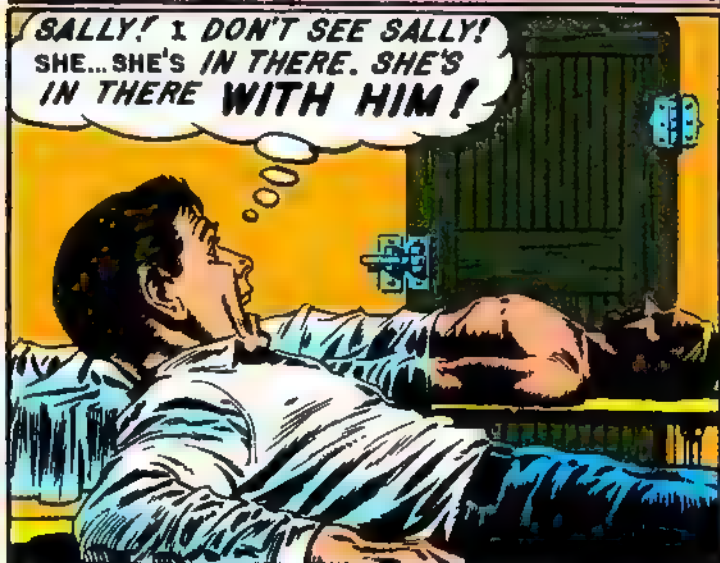
WHEN HE CAME TO AGAIN, HE FOUND HIMSELF INSIDE A DARKENED ROOM. HE WAS COLD. IT WAS AS IF THE ROOM WERE REFRIGERATED. AND AROUND HIM...



... AROUND HIM LAY OTHER BODIES... BODIES RIGID WITH RIGOR MORTIS... BODIES BLUE FROM THE COLD ... BODIES WITH SMALL PUNCTURE MARKS IN THEIR THROATS ...



HE TRIED TO MOVE. HE COULDN'T. HE TRIED TO CRY OUT. AGAIN THE SOUND SEEMED TO DIE IN HIS THROAT. HE LAY THERE...SHIVERING...LISTENING. AND THEN HE HEARD THE SOUND...THE STRANGE THROBBING SOUND...COMING FROM BEHIND A DOOR.



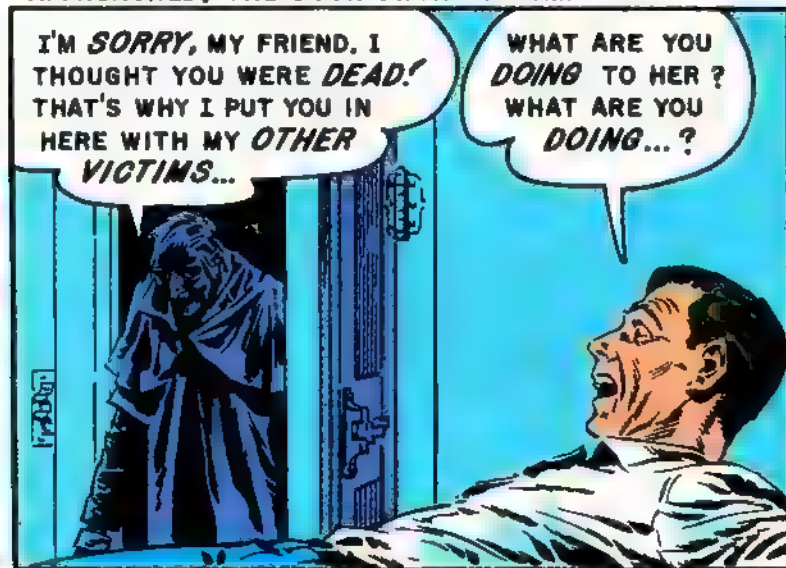
WAS SALLY STILL ALIVE...OR WAS SHE AT THIS VERY MOMENT SLIPPING INTO THE ARMS OF DEATH...HER BLOOD BEING SUCKED FROM HER BODY BY THIS FIENDISH VAMPIRE...



HER NAME ECHOED THROUGH THE COLD ROOM. PHILIP'S VOICE HAD RETURNED. HE SCREAMED...



THE THROBBING SOUND DIED AWAY. FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED. THE DOOR SWUNG OPEN...



THE FIGURE MOVED FORWARD, LEERING...



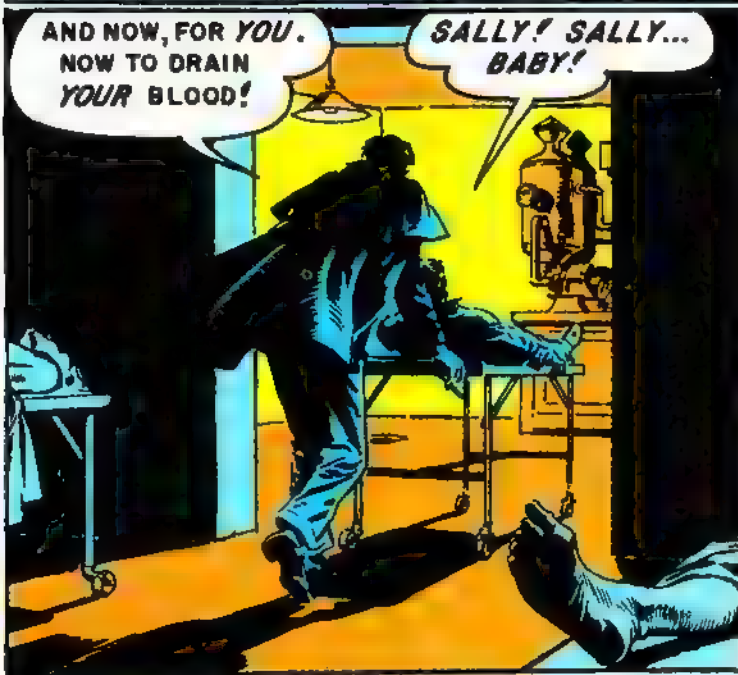
PHILIP TRIED TO MOVE. HE COULDN'T...



I MERELY SET UP TWO LAMPS ON TRIPODS AT THE PROPER LOCATION AND WAIT. WHEN MY VICTIM'S CAR APPROACHES, I SNAP THEM ON. THE CAR SWERVES...AND I HAVE WHAT I NEED...



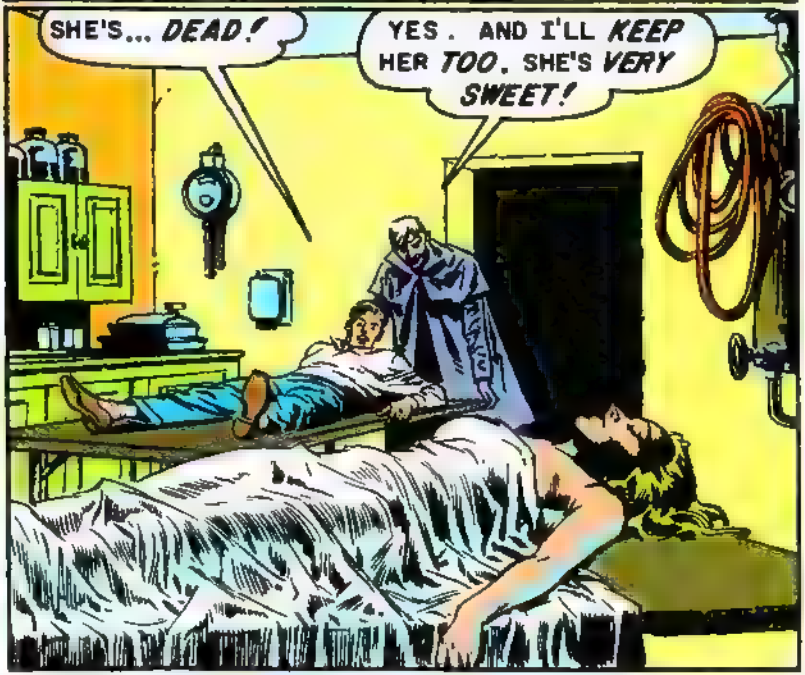
PHILIP FELT THINGS MOVING PAST HIM. HE WAS BEING WHEELED INTO THE NEXT ROOM...



AND NOW, FOR YOU.
NOW TO DRAIN
YOUR BLOOD!

SALLY! SALLY...
BABY!

SALLY LAY ON A TABLE... WHITE... COLD. THE PUNCTURE MARKS ON HER THROAT INDICATED HER STATE...



SHE'S... DEAD!

YES. AND I'LL KEEP
HER TOO. SHE'S VERY
SWEET!

THE HORRIBLE FIEND MOVED ACROSS THE ROOM, A SWITCH CLICKED. THE THROBBING SOUND STARTED...



YOU'LL...YOU'LL
KEEP HER?
I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND!

SOME PEOPLE
ARE SWEET
PEOPLE...SOME
ARE BITTER.
I ONLY LIKE
THE SWEET!

THE BITTERNESS THAT PEOPLE CARRY THROUGH LIFE IS OFTEN REFLECTED IN THEIR PHYSICAL MAKE-UP. HIGH-SCHOOL PRINCIPALS... LIBRARIANS... BUS DRIVERS... THEY'RE ALL BITTER...ACID. I TURN THOSE BACK!



THE BODIES
THEY FOUND...

HE CAME TOWARDS PHILIP WITH TWO NEEDLE-LIKE TUBES WITH RUBBER HOSES ATTACHED...



I ONLY KEEP THE SWEET ONES!
AND I CAN'T TELL UNTIL I
DRAW THEIR BLOOD! NOW,
THIS WON'T HURT. IT WILL
BE JUST LIKE FALLING ASLEEP...

THE THING BENT OVER PHILIP, PLUNGING THE TWO NEEDLES INTO HIS THROAT...



IT'S A PUMP AFFAIR!
AIR GOES IN ONE TUBE...
BLOOD COMES OUT THE OTHER...

DON'T YOU...
DON'T YOU
DRINK
BLOOD?
AREN'T...

PHILIP FELT HIMSELF FADING. HE COULD HARDLY ASK THE QUESTION... HARDLY HEAR THE ANSWER...



...AREN'T YOU
A...VAMPIRE?

VAMPIRE? ME? HADES,
NO! I CAN'T STAND BLOOD!
I LIKE NICE SWEET THINGS!
I'M A GHOUL!

**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL
THE EC COMICS!**



SUBSCRIBE!

AND GET ANY OR ALL OF THE FABULOUS
EC COMICS DELIVERED DIRECT TO YOUR
CRYPT, VAULT, HAUNT OR HOUSE IN A
STOUT, ILLUSTRATED MANILA ENVELOPE!

GEMSTONE PUBLISHING

PO BOX 469
WEST PLAINS, MO 65775
417-256-2224
or call 1-800-EC CRYPT



START MY 4-ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FOLLOWING
EC COMICS:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRYPT | <input type="checkbox"/> WEIRD SCIENCE | <input type="checkbox"/> SHOCK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> VAULT | <input type="checkbox"/> WEIRD FANTASY | <input type="checkbox"/> TWO-FISTED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAUNT | <input type="checkbox"/> INCREDIBLE SF | <input type="checkbox"/> CRIME |

NAME & ADDRESS:

REMIT \$8 EACH (\$12 OUTSIDE US IN US FUNDS)
DON'T CUT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
PHOTOCOPY OR YOUR OWN PAPER OKAY!

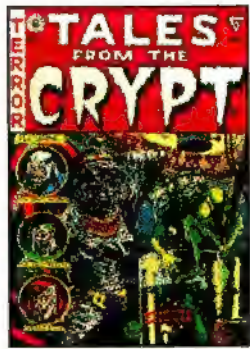
ALL SUBS START WITH "NEXT" ISSUE
PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

MISSOURI RESIDENTS MUST ADD 6.225% SALES TAX
MARYLAND RESIDENTS MUST ADD 5% SALES TAX

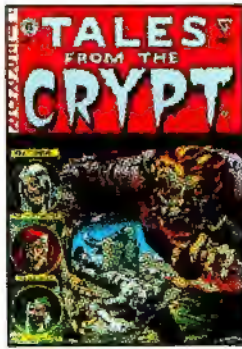
YET MORE EC COMICS!!

FOR APPROXIMATELY A YEAR, GLADSTONE PUBLISHED A LINE OF **EC** REPRINT COMICS CONSISTING OF THE TITLES SHOWN BELOW. EACH ISSUE CONTAINED 64 PAGES IN FULL COMIC BOOK COLOR, THE FIRST 32 FROM THE 'KEY' TITLE AND THE LAST 32 FROM A SECOND TITLE. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE OCCASIONAL ARTICLES ABOUT THE MACABRE IN LITERATURE, A THEN-CURRENT LETTER COLUMN AND OTHER READER-WRITTEN FEATURES.

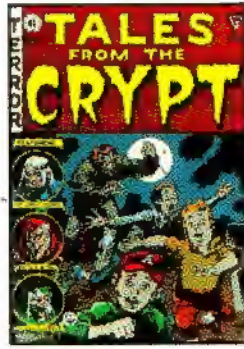
RUSS COCHRAN NOW HAS THE ENTIRE BACKSTOCK OF GLADSTONE'S EC REPRINT LINE! **EVERY ISSUE** IS IN STOCK AND AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT. COMPLETE YOUR **EC** COLLECTION BY PURCHASING THESE COMICS!



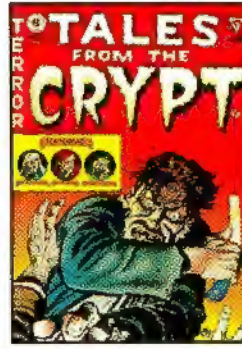
GLAD CRYPT #1



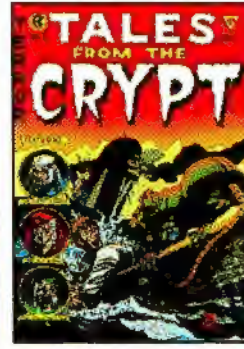
GLAD CRYPT #2



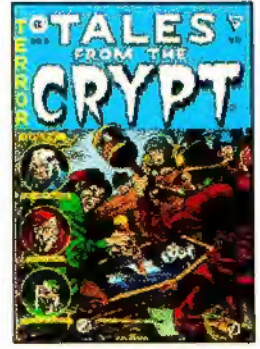
GLAD CRYPT #3



GLAD CRYPT #4



GLAD CRYPT #5



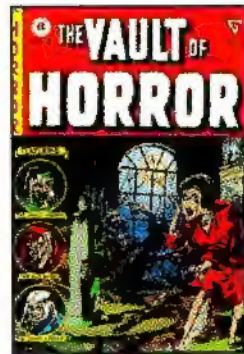
GLAD CRYPT #6



GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



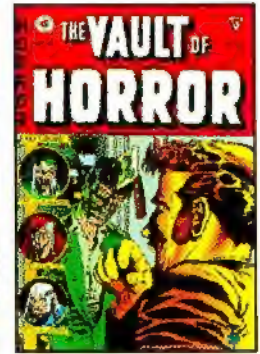
GLAD VAULT #3



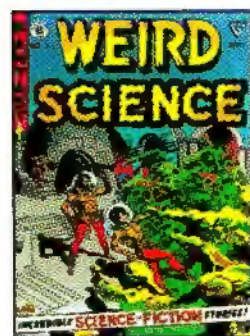
GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



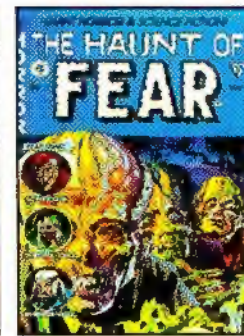
GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

CONTENTS OF GLADSTONE EC COMICS

GLAD CRYPT

#1: CRYPT 33 (1952)
CRIME 17 (1953)

#2: CRYPT 35 (1953)
CRIME 18 (1951)

#3: CRYPT 39 (1953)
CRIME 1 (1950)

#4: CRYPT 18 (1950)
CRIME 16 (1953)

#5: CRYPT 45 (1954)
CRIME 5 (1951)

#6: CRYPT 42 (1954)
CRIME 27 (1955)

GLAD VAULT

#1: VAULT 34 (1953)
HAUNT 1 (1950)

#2: VAULT 27 (1952)
HAUNT 18 (1953)

#3: HAUNT 22 (1953)
VAULT 13 (1950)

#4: VAULT 23 (1952)
HAUNT 13 (1952)

#5: VAULT 19 (1951)
W FAN 8 (1951)

#6: VAULT 32 (1953)
W FAN 6 (1951)

GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE

#1: W SCI 22 (1953)
W FAN 1 (1950)

#2: W SCI 16 (1953)
W FAN 17 (1950)

#3: W SCI 9 (1951)
W FAN 14 (1950)

#4: W S-F 27 (1955)
W FAN 11 (1952)

GLAD HAUNT

#1: HAUNT 17 (1952)
W S-F 28 (1955)

#2: HAUNT 5 (1950)
W S-F 29 (1955)

WHEN ORDERING, PLEASE IDENTIFY AS **GLAD TITLE ISSUE #**: FOR EXAMPLE "GLAD CRYPT #1." GLAD CRYPT #1 IS \$5; GLAD CRYPT #4, GLAD WEIRD #1 AND #4 ARE \$4 EACH; ALL OTHER ISSUES ARE \$3 EACH. INCLUDE \$5 PER ORDER FOR S&H (\$10 OUTSIDE US).

US FUNDS ONLY

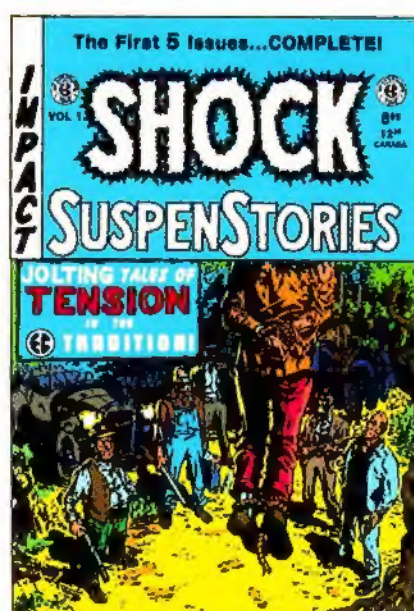
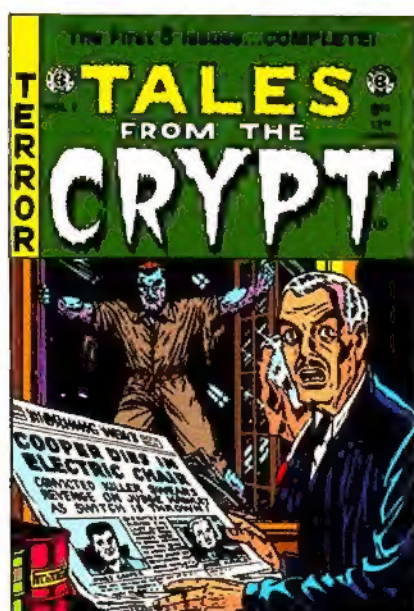
MISSOURI RESIDENTS MUST ADD 6.225% SALES TAX
GEMSTONE PUBLISHING 417-256-2224

PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
MARYLAND RESIDENTS MUST ADD 5% SALES TAX
POB 469 WEST PLAINS, MO 65775

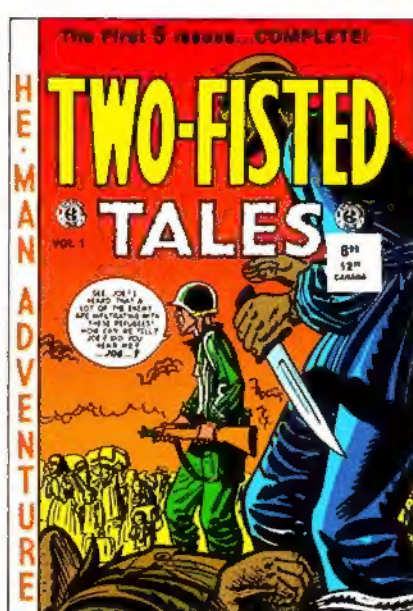
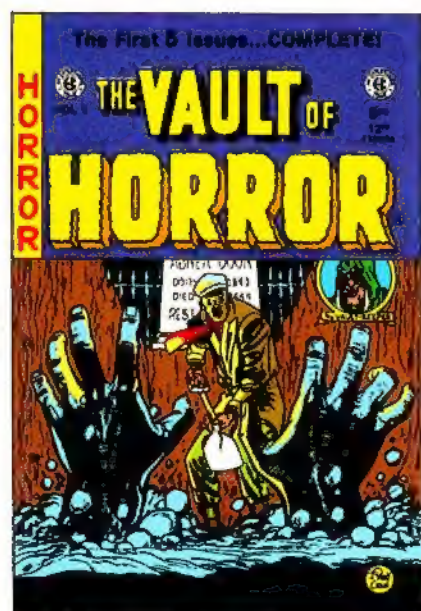
OR TO ORDER CALL 1-800-EC CRYPT AND ASK FOR THE ORDER DESK. USE THIS NUMBER FOR ORDERS ONLY!

COLLECT THEM ALL!

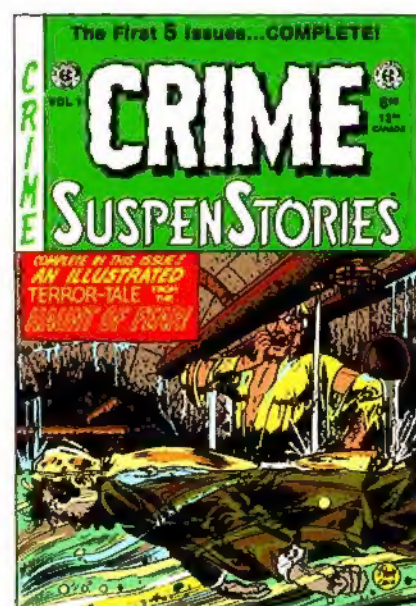
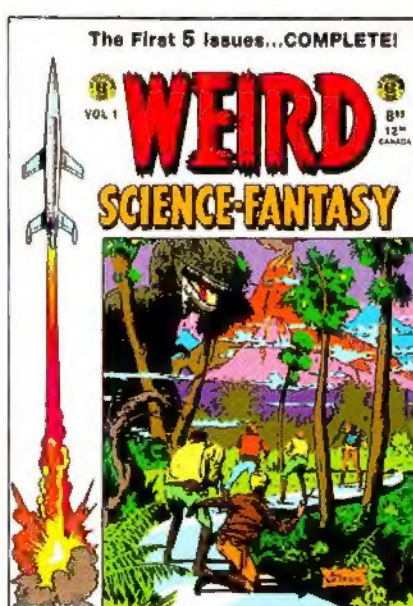
WE KNOW HOW EASY IT IS TO LOSE ONE OF YOUR BACK ISSUES, SO WE'VE PACKAGED THESE NEW SQUAREBOUND "ANNUALS" JUST FOR YOU! EACH OF THE FOLLOWING CONTAINS THE FIRST FIVE ISSUES—COMPLETE WITH COVERS—OF EACH TITLE. SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED SO ORDER NOW!



AVAILABLE 8/2/94



AVAILABLE 9/6/94



AVAILABLE 10/4/94

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

K O O M O I O C O S



E I O V O E

Evangelisti